

Creole Identity in Samuel Selvon's Fiction: A Postcolonial Study

"I was creolized from an early age, which is a good thing, in my opinion, as a mixing of traditions makes for a more harmonious world" (Selvon).

CHAPTER I

Introduction: Caribbean History and Postcolonial Phenomena

Introduction:

The present study deals with the history and culture of the Caribbean in the postcolonial context. Despite the physical isolation, colonization, de-colonization, displacement, slavery and emancipation, the Caribbean society is conducive to the emergence of a 'new world,' a 'new ethnicity' (Stuart Hall), a national culture and literary identity. Today, postcolonialism is an important discipline in cultural and literary studies. In the postcolonial Caribbean, identity is considered as multi-dimensional or pluralistic. Identity is never fixed or static; it is fluid and always in process. Identity in the postcolonial Caribbean has become synonymous with 'cultural homogenization,' 'hybridity' and 'creolization'. This study makes an attempt to study the process of creolization and the historical background of postcolonial Caribbean society. The concept of creolization in the Caribbean context is a social process that lies at the very centre of discussion of diversity, hybridization, transculturalism, transnationalism, and multiculturalism (Young, Robert). In this thesis, an attempt has been made to locate the 'creole' and 'hybrid' identity in Selvon's novels against the background of the postcolonial Caribbean.

History and culture play an important role in the postcolonial Caribbean context. This chapter explains the process of history and culture in the postcolonial Caribbean, and also examines the postcolonial ideas, concepts and processes in the Caribbean context. It contains a brief historical background of the aftermath of colonialism in the Caribbean set up and the effects on Caribbean culture. The chapter also explains the concepts of colonialism and postcolonialism of different theoreticians and the definition and explanation of terms such as colonialism, postcolonialism, diaspora and hybridity. Despite the physical isolation and colonization, de-colonization, displacement, slavery and emancipation, Caribbean

society lends itself to the emergence of a 'new world,' a 'new ethnicity' (Stuart Hall), national culture and literary identity.

Writers like Samuel Selvon, Derek Walcott, Jean Rhys, George Lamming, V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Chinua Achebe, Kazuo Ishiguro and many other writers left their respective place of birth (mostly former colonies) for better opportunities and thereby became expatriates. The concern with the consequences of history, with the social world, and its impact on the West Indian sensibility, led almost naturally to another major theme in the 1950s and 1960s. Metropolises are usually looked upon as the land of fortune for the West Indian writers and other Third World expatriate writers. The theme of emigration and self-exile was a response to both a historical phenomenon and a psychological colonial problem. During the period of 1950, West Indians were actually emigrating from the islands to the metropolises in search of what they called a 'better break' and for 'better future,' 'better opportunities'. Thus they became expatriates, though in some sense, they were also manifesting a colonial syndrome, a belief in shared heritage with the mother country and the western world. Novel after novel, poem after poem, explored the pleasures and perils of exile and their impact on the sensibilities of West Indians. Lamming's *The Emigrants*, *Water with Berries* and *The Pleasures of Exile*; Selvon's *Ways of Sunlight*, *The Lonely Londoners*, *Moses Migrating*, *Moses Ascending*, Brathwaite's *Rights of Passage* and the novels of Austin Clarke have all revealed the enlarged consciousness of the migrant side by side with his peculiar disorientation in an alien world. The idea of emigration has become almost a 'global phenomenon' and a new extension of West Indian consciousness and that vision has already begun to emerge in England and North America. The former colonies in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean became independent which brought the colonizers and the colonized, at par. The colonial masters were decentred as the colonizers saw themselves at the center of the world, while the colonized were seen at the margins. Thus, hegemonic power paradigm is overturned. However, the overturning resulted in a kind of cultural and intellectual vacuum. This cultural and intellectual vacuum led to voluntary intellectual and political exodus to metropolitan centers of the world, located mostly in the UK and the USA.

The main Caribbean literary figures such as C. L. R. James, Samuel Selvon, George Lamming, Wilson Harris, Derek Walcott, V. S. Naipaul, Edward Brathwaite,

Earl Lovelace and others focus on colonization, ethnicity, hybridity, creolization, racial trauma, gender identity, mixed blood, and other key concepts of postcolonial studies. Postcolonial theory studies the process and the effects of cultural displacement and the ways in which the displaced culturally defended themselves (Bertens; 2001: 200). Once culturally uprooted and displaced people are inclined to display anomalies stemming that they are difficult to classify whether they belong to 'Old' and 'New' world from the fact, that the adaptation process to the 'new' cultural atmosphere has taken some considerable time. Here, 'adaptation' implies the existence of a stage of being 'in-between' two spheres, without aligning with any of the sides. This state of being 'in-between' two, or at times multiple, spheres in the postcolonial context is most efficiently defined by the term 'creole' and 'hybridity' which are directly related to the cultural self-definition of an individual or an ethnic group.

Most of the postcolonial writers like Selvon and Naipaul undergo a kind of cultural and linguistic translation. This 'translational' characteristic feature and identity have placed them in the position of 'not quite' or 'in-between'. Bhabha observes that the postcolonial migrant writing is the writing of 'not quite' and 'in-between'. 'Creolization' and 'hybridity' arise due to cultural and linguistic translation and transformation to the 'new world'. This study, therefore, attempts to mark out 'creole' and 'hybrid' identity in Samuel Selvon's fiction.

Caribbean society bears the legacy of exploitation, marginalization and colonial oppression. Amerindians, Africans, and Indians were included in Europe's onward march of 'Progress,' but only as performers of pre-defined roles in the drama of European Empire. A culturally and racially divided pluralistic (creole and hybrid) society was created (Taylor, Patrick. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25111990>), its hierarchical structure held together by force (Smith-772-75). If ascribed racial difference was the primary distinguishing feature of colonial domination (Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth*, 39-42), ethnicity, colour, class exclusion and gender differentiation were also central to colonial society. These sites of difference often became the basis for scenes of disruption as the colonized struggled for liberation from their colonizers.

Writers of similar persuasion such as V.S. Naipaul, Samuel Selvon, Wilson Harris, and George Lamming are deeply concerned with the socio-cultural, political

colonialism, slavery and economic problems of the individual and West Indian society. These writers try to define the socio-cultural, racial and economic patterns of the Caribbean society. As Kenneth Ramchand observed:

It is not unique for novelists to be regarded as having something special to say as their societies. But the West Indian novelists apply themselves with unusual urgency and unanimity to an analysis and interpretation of their society's ills, including social and economic deprivations of the majority; the pervasive consciousness of race and colour; the cynicism and uncertainty of the native bourgeoisie in power after independence; the lack of history to be proud of; and the absence of traditional or settled values. (Ramchand: *West Indian Novel and Its Background*, 1983:4)

Politically, the Europeans, mostly Whites, not only colonized the land and people but also turned them into mere slaves and subjected them to indignity. In the colonial context, Fanon writes: "The settler only ends his work of breaking in the native when the latter admits loudly and intelligibly the supremacy of the white man's value" (*The Wretched of the Earth*, 43). The process of colonization involved not only physical occupation of the land and imposition of government (politically) on the colonized place, but also mental colonization (double colonization). The 'plantation economy' introduced by the white masters helped only the rich class. The social and economic backwardness of majority of creoles, besides exploitation and chicanery, strained the relationship of the colonizer and the colonized. The white master was preoccupied with his personal aggrandizement neglecting the progress and welfare of the islands. Wilson Harris called this syndrome "victor-victim stasis" (King, Bruce. *West Indian Literature*, 11). An exploration of the way in which this has affected the contemporary society became the central theme in his first four novels which constituted the *Guyana Quartet*. Culturally, too, the West Indians suffered during and after colonization. They became shipwrecks on the islands without any strong affiliation to any particular cultural or linguistic tradition. Having settled in the West Indies they have only historical connection with the land. They could neither preserve their ancestral cultural identity, nor accept a wholly alien culture. The cultural patterns imported from England and carefully fostered to supplant existing African, Indian or Asian patterns and further the colonizers damaged the West Indian psyche.

Political freedom did not bring the West Indians real emancipation from cultural bondage. They were unable to assert themselves and build their national characters and establish their national identity. Since most of them are rootless beings, there is in the West Indian writing a vehement search for the cultural roots unadulterated by the Western and European cultures. Displeased with the socio-political atmosphere, cultural environment, loss of identity and recognition, the Creole in West Indies had been performing some sort of cultural pilgrimage to his native country with a view to refreshing his mind and obtaining spiritual solace. Consequently, the individual in the West Indies developed a sense of duality, living in double exile.

As a fundamental aspect of the colonial experience, race has always been a crucial issue in colonial relations and has surfaced in various dimensions in the literature of the West Indies. The simplicity of the colonial society, as observed by Naipaul in *The Loss of Eldorado*, was the very simplicity of its values of money, race, and the colour-structured society. Naipaul concludes that the West Indian society can be 'unified' only by the consensual acceptance of the inferiority of 'negro-ness,' race being an appalling definer of value. It came up not only in relations between the European white master and the black slave, but also between the various gradations of the colour hierarchy. Such consistent debasement of 'negro-ness' had two major psychological repercussions: it instilled in the black slave an overwhelming awe of everything white and at the same time bred a sense of inferiority and self-abasement in his innermost consciousness. The emancipation of slaves and the exhilaration of freedom which accompanied it did nothing much to change the general thinking of race; rather the importation of indentured labour from India into a number of West Indian islands introduced a new racial element, complicating the White-Black dichotomy.

Impacted by the separate racial identities, the coloured, white, African and East Indian citizens, the West Indian colonial society was often fearful, suspicious and even contemptuous of each other. The colonial society, reflecting most of these tensions, remained fragmented and unsettled, a prey to racially inspired conflicts and violence. V.S. Reid provided an interesting exploration of this theme in *The Leopards* (1958). Walcott and Lamming explored similar confrontation in *Dream on Monkey Mountain*, *T-Jean and His Brothers* and *Water with Berries* respectively. In *A*

Brighter Sun, Selvon presented a movement forward from enclosed racial entities followed by V.S. Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira* which is a comic evocation of the racial, religious and cultural mix-up, a historical legacy of Trinidad society.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There has often been a tendency in the modern world to dismiss the past, as Henry Ford did with his statement that "History is bunk," (*Chicago Tribune*, 1916), and pretend that it has no influence on the present. Most modern writers insist that the past cannot be so readily ignored. Major historical events, beliefs, and people reverberate through the ages, and it is dangerous to deny this. To understand the relation between action and consequence, or cause and effect, it helps to establish what the past entails and how it affects the present. When modern writers write about historical times and people, their aim is often to show the ways in which history impacts the present. Many writers consider the central importance of the past as being its ability to help us define who we are in the present. Eliot writes about 'historical sense' in "Tradition and the Individual Talent". He writes that the historical sense "involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence" and it is "a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional" (www.bartleby.com). For Eliot, the term 'tradition' is imbued with a special and complex character. It represents a 'simultaneous order,' by which Eliot means a historical timelessness— a fusion of past and present— and, at the same time, a sense of present temporality. In this context Fred D' Aguiar argues:

There is simply too much history between us all [...]. What began as a single thread has, over the generations, woven itself into a prodigious carpet that cannot be unwoven. There is no good in pretending that a single thread of cause and effect exists now when in actual fact the carpet is before us with many beginnings and no end in sight. (*The Longest Memory*, 33)

History plays a major concern in Caribbean literature, exerting, in Mark McWatt's words, "an almost obsessive influence upon the creative imagination of the West Indian writer" (McWatt, 12). The reassessment of the past is indeed a source of regeneration and identity for the rootless and dismembered people of former colonies,

even though such (re) consideration that George Lamming considers history as a process of “the backward glance” (McWatt, 12) and inevitably involves suffering. The Caribbean writers of the younger generation, most of whom have settled outside the Caribbean area such as V.S Naipaul, Samuel Selvon, Derek Walcott, George Lamming, Caryl Phillips, Jean Rhys, address slavery and rootless of identity in their fiction. Like their literary predecessors, these ‘New Voices’ (Benedicte Ledent) have turned to the past in an attempt to understand where they came from, better to comprehend who they are and where they are going.

In the time of slavery, middle passage and colonialism, the history of the Caribbean was considered as an unspeakable violence, both psychologically and physically. It is Frantz Fanon who first pointed out the psychological dimension of domination in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*. Succeeding generations of Caribbean writers have been well aware of the impact of colonialism and racism on the minds of colonizers. In articulating Fanon’s observations of clinical cases in his psychiatric practice and his own experiences as a black man in Europe and elsewhere, Fanon brought an understanding of the alienation sustained by the colonized. Colonialism, plantocracy and slavery have been the concerns of political philosophers and social scientists. But the impact of these political events and social changes on the West Indian psyche is recorded creatively and with great sensitivity by the West Indian writers. In fact, West Indian novels embody in a vital sense the Third World experience of loss, emptiness and abandonment. The Caribbean in general suffers from the phenomenon of non history, lack of collective memory and no sense of a chronology. The history of Martinique in particular is made up of a number of pseudo-events which happened elsewhere. The history of greed and exploitation that follows is not the history of those who inhabit these islands for them, it is in French word “*unehistoire subie*” (a history of submission). Their history remains to be written. Glissant views on the lack of history and opines that the Caribbean history was transforming towards the “new world” he says, “Not only a sense of ancestral past is lost but the land is transformed that it no longer allows the exploration of past association” (*Caribbean Discourse*, XXXIII).

Edouard Glissant undermines traditional faith in the sovereign individual and rational subjectivity. He sets out to “unmask history as a coherent, progressive system” (*Caribbean Discourse*, XXV). The vision of history of the Caribbean moving

forever upward and onward fixes the Caribbean on the margins of world history that dooms the powerless to extinction. Instead, Glissant sees that the world and the Caribbean in particular in terms of an intricate branching of communities, an infinite wandering across cultures, where triumphs are momentary and where ‘adaptation’ and ‘creolization’ are the prevailing forces. He says “History (with capital H) ends where the histories of those people are reputed to be without history come together” (*Caribbean Discourse*, 64).

The colonial struggles of the European powers since the 15th century play a significant role in the history of the Caribbean. In the 20th century, the Caribbean was again important during World War II, in the decolonization wave in the post-war period. Genocide, slavery, immigration and rivalry between world powers gave the Caribbean history an impact disproportionate to the size of this small region. The ‘Caribbean,’ generally considered as one area, is highly discrete in its race, topography and languages, and includes the mainland Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana, the Atlantic island of Barbados, the Lesser Antilles and whose size and history gave it an early sense of separate nationhood. Louis James explains the Caribbean historical background thus:

The Caribbean is a region in which the aboriginal communities were virtually exterminated, and replaced by peoples from Africa, Asia and Europe. Yet it has established a distinctive identity that in turn has contributed to global cultures, including those of the countries from which its peoples originally came. (*Caribbean Literature in English*, 1)

Many of the Caribbean nations gained independence from Europe in the 1960s although some of the territories of the Francophone Caribbean, such as Guadeloupe, Martinique and Guyana (French Guyana), still remain colonies of France. In the Anglophone Caribbean especially, independence was followed by a wave of migration to the British motherland in the hope of partaking in an economic prosperity that was lacking at home. The first generation of the Caribbean emigrants, which came to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s, is known as ‘Windrush Generation’ after the name of the first boat, the *SS Empire Windrush* that took the Jamaicans to London in 1948. Today there are also large diaspora communities in the UK, the USA and Canada.

The region has been partly defined by historic accident, and has gone under various names in its history. ‘West Indies’ was a notorious mistake, made in 1492, when Columbus reached San Salvador. He believed that he had found the Indies off Cathay, and called the folk he met ‘Indians’. The term ‘West Indies’ was used to distinguish the islands from the ‘East Indies,’ and until recently, for English speakers, it meant the British territories. The islands were also called the ‘Antilles,’ and the whole area, the Caribbean. But, neither name is precise. The ‘Antilles’ were a pre-Columbian myth, a land or islands situated somewhere in the Western Atlantic, and although Caribs lived in the area when Columbus arrived, so did Taino, Arawaks and Ciboney.

Naming the inhabitants proved as slippery as defining the region. In the first two centuries of European contact, the aborigines were hunted like animals or killed off by slave labour and imported diseases. The Indian population of Hispaniola was calculated at between two and three hundred thousand in 1492; by 1514, it had shrunk to an estimated fourteen thousand (*From Columbus to Castro*. 1970, 35). The original people remained an obstinate presence. Their blood entered the Caribbean social mix. The last Carib was ended on St. Vincent as late as 1797, a Carib settlement still survives on Dominica, and in Guyana and Belize in particular, aboriginal people still offer evidence of the pre-Columbian cultural roots surviving in the Caribbean with the virtual disappearance of the original ‘West Indies’. However, the huge majority population became one of African descent. This remained invisible to Europe; when Richard Cumberland wrote his play *The West Indian* in 1771, the title referred only to the white planter class. With political independence this changed and by the mid-twentieth century, Kamau Brathwaite could declare that: “when most of us speak of ‘The West Indian’ we think of someone of African descent” (Brathwaite. *Roots*, 1963, 40). But, by now, there is a significant presence of ‘real’ Indians in the South-Eastern Caribbean.

“The West Indian East Indians became East Indian West Indians”(in *Caribbean Literature in English*, 2) Antonio Benitez-Rojo argued that the Caribbean, with its conflicting identities, is ‘a repeating island,’ an unstable region suspended between cultures, “the ultimate meta-archipelago”(the group of islands) (*Repeating Island*, 15). It is an area of flux like the “spiral chaos of the Milky Way” (*Caribbean Literature in English*, 2), held within contexts of geography, and united by a common

history of slavery. The first sixteenth-century Spanish communities grew spices and coffee, and like the first white Barbadians, farmed small areas. But sugarcane, which was introduced to Hispaniola in 1522, quickly dominated the West Indian life and culture. Its cultivation was labour intensive and between four and five million African slaves were imported to work in the Caribbean plantations. After 1834, when slavery was abolished in British territories, indentured East Indian labourers, together with a large number of Chinese, Portuguese and Irish, were imported into the still expanding plantations of Trinidad and British Guiana, often living in conditions little better than those of the Caribbean society. In this society power was held by an elite, selected not by merit but by colour, while the distinctive culture was created by the disempowered black majority. (*West Indian Societies*. 1972, 213)

The terms ‘Caribbean’ and ‘West Indies’ are often used interchangeably to refer to the island nations of the Caribbean Sea and territories on the surrounding South and Central American mainland such as Guyana and Belize. More accurately however, the term ‘Caribbean’ refers to all island nations rated in the area and mainland Guyana and Belize, while the expression ‘West Indies’ refers only to those nations that were formerly British colonies, such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Antigua, Dominica, Guyana and sometime Belize. The origin of the two terms also differs, with ‘Caribbean’ (*Key Concepts*, 31) deriving from a corruption of the Spanish ‘caribal’ (*Key Concepts*, 31), which is generally considered to be a ‘mishearing’ of an Amerindian word. ‘West Indies’ arose in contrast to the designation ‘East Indies,’ the spice islands of Asia, and Columbus’ intended destination, when he discovered the Caribbean in 1492 (*Post-Colonial Studies: Key Concepts*, 31).

Creating Caribbean Paradigm– ‘Caribbeanness’

For centuries, Caribbean had been at the mercy of invaders, exploiters, settlers, raiders and colonizers. The most powerful metaphor of ‘Caribbeanness’ is the figure of Caliban from Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest*. Prospero claims that Caliban did not know the use of language. Prospero gave him language and taught him civilization. This is a myth created and perpetuated by the European writers, intellectuals and thinkers during the period of colonialism. In the Caribbean, colonizers very tactfully ingrained this ‘inferiority’ myth into the psyche of the young and the old. It was necessary for the European to instill a sense of ‘inferiority’ (Frantz

Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*) into the minds of the young pursuing knowledge in missionary schools. They were to establish political and cultural hegemony over the Caribbean. Through trade, commerce, education and language, the Europeans subjugated the Caribbean by exploiting their innocence, weakness and helplessness.

V S Naipaul, George Lamming, Samuel Selvon, Derek Walcott and other writers of similar persuasion defined the use of 'Western' intellectual paradigm-postmodernism, feminism and even postcolonial- in the reading of their works. From their writings and from the real experience of the 'New World' they created their own paradigms. Many writers from the region challenge Shakespeare's depiction of Caliban as bestial and brutal, and reclaim his image as an icon of Caribbean self-assertion although Shakespeare did not explicitly state that the setting of *The Tempest* is the Caribbean. The power relations between Prospero and Caliban are suggestive of the master-slave relationship found on the plantation. In this context, the Caliban-Prospero relationship leads to the larger issue of language. Caliban is Prospero's slave. Prospero also claims that Caliban did not know the use of language until he was taught by his master. Thus, the only way Caliban can express himself is within the parameters of his master's tongue. Miranda obviously believes it to be a great honour and reminds Caliban how she "took pains to make thee [him] speak" (*The Tempest*, Act 1, Scene 2, 16) and dismisses Caliban's previous way of speaking as sheer 'gabble'. However, Caliban himself obviously takes a very different view and in a memorable quote that is often cited by anti-colonialist critics he tells them: "You taught me language; and my profit on't is I know how to curse" (*The Tempest*, Act 1, Scene 2, 16). He goes on further to wish "the red plague rid you for teaching me your language!" (*The Tempest*, Act 1, Scene 2, 16) clearly not sharing Miranda's view that she has done him a great service. George Lamming, in his collection of essays *The Pleasures of Exile* (1960), argues for this reason that Caliban is imprisoned in Prospero's language: "There is no escape from the prison of Prospero's gift. This is the first important achievement of the colonizing process" (*The Pleasures of Exile*, 109). He claims that Caliban is a metaphor for the enslaved.

The rewriting of the master narratives of English literature is a common practice among postcolonial writers— *The Tempest* being just another case in point. The telling of a story from another prospective can be seen as an attempt to explore the gaps and silences in a text. Writing as an extension of language use, is one of the

strongest forms of cultural hegemony and the rewriting of the colonial canon becomes a subversive and liberating act for the colonized. Hence, the postcolonial view of *The Tempest* is through the character of Caliban, seen not as the 'deformed slave' of the *dramatis personae* but as a native of the island over whom Prospero has imposed an obnoxious form of colonial domination. The following speech by Caliban shows the postcolonial reading of *The Tempest*:

I must eat my dinner.
This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first
Thou strok'st me, and made much of me; would'st give me
Water with berries in't; and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee
And show'd thee all the qualities o' th'isle,
The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and feretile:
Curs'd be I that did so! All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have,
Which first was mine own King: and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o' th'island. (*The Tempest*. Act I Scene II, 16)

Many writers from the Caribbean now live in other parts of the world, ranging from the old colonial centers such as France and Britain to the other parts of the Americas, such as the USA and Canada. These writers often thematize the experience of exile and diaspora and of adapting their Caribbean (creole) heritage to the new environment. Among the most prominent of these writers are Caryl Phillips and the Trinidadians, V.S. Naipaul and Samuel Selvon, who are of East Indian descent.

Much of contemporary criticism on Caribbean literature and cultures not only relocates the region within the context of the Americas at large but also foregrounds the situation of the Caribbean in an increasingly globalised world. Phenomena such as 'creolization' and 'hybridization' which were formerly regarded as uniquely Caribbean, are today frequently looked upon, most notably by Glissant in *Politics of Relation*, as occurring globally. In this context, the Caribbean serves as a model for

transcending linguistic borders and colonialist divisions. Moreover, many Caribbean writers now live in the USA, Canada, and Europe. The works they provide in the present location, as transnational, diasporic and hybrid. As migrant authors, they even challenge to redefine the parameters of postcolonial studies.

Colonial control by the great European powers was integral to the South Atlantic System. Conquering the native Caribbean people and forcing them to work; exploiting the islands' deposits of valuable minerals; producing high-value agricultural staples; and, when it became necessary, importing millions of enslaved workers from Africa– were all enterprises of the overseas deployment of organized, institutionalized force on an unprecedented scale.

In the long history of colonial domination, the Caribbean is rightly considered the oldest theatre of overseas European expansion. The extended duration of the region's colonial experience as well as the depth of the colonial imprint on its society and culture dwarf those prevailing in African or Asian colonies during the age of high imperialism (1850-1914). Whereas, in those latter regions, with few exceptions, colonial arrangements lasted less than a century, in the Caribbean, most societies were built from the scratch at least 350 years ago (and some more than 500 years ago), all within strictures dictated by a mercantile, colonial capitalism.

Slave Trade and Slavery in the Caribbean Context

In the Caribbean, however, the demographic collapse of the indigenous population led to the near-complete re-population of the islands by enslaved Africans who were transported to the region as a rightless and degraded workforce for emerging plantation enterprises. The imported population increasingly provided the reason for the emerging of colonies in which sugar, coffee, indigo, cocoa and other tropical staples shaped the course of political and economic development. To be sure, communities of native Caribbean descent persist today in Dominica, St. Vincent, and other islands and in Puerto Rico. Its diaspora aims to attain federal recognition has recently taken hold likewise, the size of populations locally identified as 'White' (or 'Asian') varies greatly from island to island. Yet, undoubtedly the Caribbean region as a whole is demographically the most highly 'Africanized' part of the 'New World'.

Contemporary historians of the trans-Atlantic slave trade tend to agree that the Antilles absorbed about 45% or even upwards of 10 million enslaved Africans who

survived their violence of capture in Africa and the ordeal of the Middle Passage (Etlis 2001). The phrases, 'modern,' 'capitalist,' and 'global' merit emphasis, as all three represent major forces and characteristics of Caribbean history and social life. Another set of contrasts the relation of the social and cultural formalities emerging in the Caribbean and what today is considered as 'global modernity'. Out of such experiences of modernization, what is now traditionally understood as 'Caribbean cultures' emerged. Yoked together under conditions rarely of their own choosing, the people who look upon themselves today as natives of the Caribbean became such only through processes of massive cultural transformation that we have come to understand as 'creolization'.

Caribbean people fought back despite the unparalleled duration of their history of colonization, the sheer brutality of the system of domination unleashed against them, and the racist discourses. They did so first in deeds, then in words— and, this rebellion itself is an eloquent testimony to a spirit of resistance in a region whose inhabitants were denied their humanity. The attack on racism began in earnest with the Amerindian and African slave rebellions and abolitionist movements, the struggle intensified as local Caribbean personalities joined the struggle against slave trade and slavery and, against worldwide racism.

No Caribbean novel can be understood and appreciated without an insight into the chequered Caribbean history, for there is a constant overlapping of fiction and history. The Caribbean novel is distinctive for its social consciousness. The Caribbean novelist had an unenviable task at hand. He was confronted by a society formed through slavery and colonialism whose values had never been defined before. The novelist had to recreate experience and also simultaneously create the standards against which such an experience had to be judged.

Middle Passage/Triangular Trade

Concerning the Trans-Atlantic slave trade which factually decimated large numbers of innocent people from a particular race and sent them out of their place of origin to an unknown destination, which was against their wishes. 'Middle Passage/Triangular Trade,' which consisted of journeys made from the ports of Britain to the West Coast of Africa, the West Indies and back to Britain. It was triangular exchange of cargo and slaves from Africa to the West Indies and to

England. Thousands of Africans were uprooted from their 'homelands' in several parts of Africa and were brought to the West Indies for the work in sugar plantations. Jacob Oluwatayo Adeuyan narrates the inhuman experience of 'Middle Passage' in his famous work, *The Return to the Tidal Flow of the Middle Passage*:

[Middle Passage] concerning inhuman, murderous and wicked actions of one race against the other, which the memory of the time and period is almost fading away or being forgotten to a certain level. But no matter what the healing process and methods applied to heal those wounds, the scars would forever remain conspicuously on the foreheads of the afflicted persons...[African people] were decimated and forcefully taken away from her [Africa] courtyard to unknown foreign lands through journey of no return to her [Africa] beautiful courtyard. (*The Return to the Tidal Flow of the Middle Passage*, 14)

'Middle Passage/Triangular Trade,' which mainly comprised the forceful removal of persons against their wishes. European and American slave traders in collaboration with their African agents transported more than 15-20 million enslaved Africans from their homelands to the areas of tropical cultivation forms of Europe such as Caribbean Islands and sub-tropical area of America. The majority of slaves both men and women worked as labours in agricultural plantations without adequate compensations for their labour and under unhygienic conditions that resulted into death of many slaves. C.L.R James, in his classic work *The Black Jacobins*, explains the experience of inhuman torture of 'Middle Passage':

Africa, remember was the dramatic scene of the cruel and bloody origin of the modern West Indies, the beginning of the island's violent progress through what Eric Williams called the broiling sun of the sugar, tobacco and cotton plantations. European greed, the motive force in capitalism, was not satisfied with merely physically wrenching a whole people from their mother continent, but further stifled any possibility of a continuous culture on the part of the captives by denying them a family life. Denied language and a common culture, deprived of political and economic power, and without the corrective of an unbiased, an all-sided, educational system even after 'freedom' was regained, the

uprooted black population looked to the white world for a pattern of life.
(C.L.R. James, 405)

The major reason that prompted the 'Middle Passage/Atlantic slave trade' was brought about when the need to develop agricultural plantations in the 'New World'. English colonists were required people to work in the sugarcane fields to the economic advantages. The system of slave traders were been transported across the ocean was reported to be worst of its kind in the history of mankind. Jacob Oluwatayo explains:

...sometimes as far as over one thousand miles chained in shackles and without enough food and clean water for them [slaves] to eat and drink...

They [slaves] were often treated less than animals throughout the journey. People were stuffed between decks in spaces too low for the standing of a man. The heat in the cabins was enormous for humans to bear and the air was virtually un-breathable. Women were often abused sexually while men were chained in pairs, shackled wrist or ankle to ankle and crowded together like a pack of sardine fish in a container.
(*The Return to the Tidal Flow of the Middle Passage*, 53, 58)

Conclusively, the 'Middle Passage/Triangular Trade' made directly or indirectly responsible for the evacuation of between 25-30 million people of Africa. They were taken away from their homelands to foreign countries as slaves to work, which was against their wishes. In other words:

They (Africans) were unjustly robbed of their freedom, liberty, dignity and natural enjoyment. These inevitable events were the major factors that later metamorphosed into racism and marginalization of black people anywhere they could be found on the surface of the earth. (*The Return to the Tidal Flow of the Middle Passage*, 128)

Thousands of Africans were uprooted from their respective tribes in several parts of Africa and were brought to the West Indies to work in sugar plantations. They were tortured inhumanly. In this context C.L.R. James explains the worst experience of slave trade in his classic work, *The Black Jacobins*:

They were allowed on deck briefly for feeding, or, if the weather was bad, not at all those that survived lost their names, their families, their religion and their language and a strange identity was forced on them. Any infringement of plantation rules brought flogging, mutilation, the most intimate indignities, fortune and execution in one respect only was the lot of black slaves rather than that of white convicts; it was in the slave master's interest to keep his valuable property in good working order. (4)

[for slaves] irons on the hands and feet, blocks of wood on the buttocks of the victim; salt, pepper, citron, cinder, aloes, and hot ashes were poured on the bleeding wounds. Mutilations were common, limbs, ears and sometimes the private parts, to deprive them of the pleasures which they could indulge in without expense. Their masters poured burning wax on their arms and hands and shoulders, emptied the boiling cane sugar over their heads, burnt them alive, roasted them on slow fires, filled them with gunpowder and blew them up with a match; buried them up to the neck and smeared their heads with sugar...made them to eat their excrement, drink their urine, and lick the saliva of other slaves. (12-13)

Slave societies found their healers and visionaries, story-tellers and organizers of resistance. A network of complex blood ties formed at plantation work created hierarchies in which skilled slaves supervised menial workers. Women, with a lower status than men became field labourers, domestic servants, and children's nannies (Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 1990). An important aspect of slave life was the small holdings, given to enable slaves to feed themselves. These developed into source of trade and barter, deepening a bond between them and the land that was to persist in to the twentieth century. George Lamming, Sam Selvon and others were claim that the West Indian sensibility remained essentially 'present' Caribbean food and cooking and index of cultural diversity [creolization], based as it was an West African yam, coconut ackee and bananas. Indian mangoes and bread-fruit from the South Seas became a significant element in West Indian cultural identity. Spiritual traditions survived from Africa. Slaves lacked mental and physical strength, and they turned to religious practices. Although punished when discovered,

often by death, the cults of obeah, Shango, Myalism, Poomania and Vodoun were central to slave culture and which remain a dynamic force in the Caribbean even today.

Thus, the Caribbean history is a tragic history of slavery, indentured labour and racial miscegenation. Though heterogeneous in character, the Caribbean society was historically never conceived as a meeting of people from different parts of the world to live amicably. On the contrary, it is a society into which men and women were assembled for one and only purpose—labour. In this regard, George Lamming has rightly remarked: “Each race made a different journey to the Caribbean, with a different motive. Their heritage was different, their psychological encounter with white authority had different reverberations” (*Anthology of Caribbean Essays*, 1973; 8).

Postcolonial Phenomena in the Caribbean

Postcolonial studies registered an exponential growth in the wake of postmodernism in the last few decades, leading to a re-conceptualization of ‘nation,’ ‘culture,’ and ‘history’. This thesis explores crucial mutation in contemporary postcolonial thought while keeping in mind the challenge of ‘colonization,’ ‘diaspora,’ ‘hybridity,’ ‘creolization,’ and ‘transculturalism’ in the Caribbean context. Lately, postcolonial studies came under immense pressure to demonstrate its usefulness by addressing the social, economic, political and academic concerns in the context of the rising challenges of ‘cosmopolitanism,’ ‘transnationalism,’ ‘hybridity,’ ‘creolization,’ and ‘globalization’. The aim of this thesis is to provide a discussion on these issues so as to arrive at insights and perspectives that can lead to meaningful research in the area of postcolonial studies in the Caribbean context.

The present thesis demonstrates the changes, differences and developments that emerged during and after colonialism. The present study also analyses the thematization of the postcolonial processes which came into being as a result of colonialism. The study is justified by a number of cultural processes of the postcolonial situation in the Caribbean. The theoretical foundation of the study allows the exposition and elucidation of the existence of postcolonial identities in the Caribbean and Trinidadian cultural life; finally, the processes of hybridity and creolization are explained.

The postcolonial theory in the Caribbean context looks at or addresses the following:

- a. Colonial representation of the native,
- b. The epistemological underpinnings (colonial histories, cartography, anthropology, area studies),
- c. The feminization, marginalization and dehumanization of the 'native,'
- d. The rise of nationalist and/or nativist discourse that resisted colonialism, and other forms of resistance,
- e. The psychological impact of colonialism on both the colonizer and the colonized,
- f. Re-visioning of the tragic history like slave trade and indentured labourers, and
- g. Transition of 'new society,' 'new identity,' and 'new world' (creole and hybrid).

Postcolonial theory studies the process and the effects of cultural displacement and the ways in which the displaced have culturally defended themselves (Bertens, 2001: 200). Once culturally uprooted and displaced people are inclined to display anomalies stemming from the fact that the adaptation process to the new cultural atmosphere takes some considerable time. Here, 'adaptation' implies the existence of a state of being in-between two spheres, without aligning with any of the sides. This state of being in-between two, or at times multiple, spheres in the postcolonial context is most efficiently reflected by the terms 'hybridity' and 'creolization,' terms which are directly related to the cultural self-definition of the individual or ethnic group.

Readings of postcolonial literatures are sometimes resourced by concepts taken from many other critical practices such as poststructuralism, feminism, Marxism, psychoanalysis and linguistics. Such a variety creates both discord and complicity within the field to the extent that there seems on one critical procedure that might identify as postcolonial. In order to bear witness to enabling possibilities of postcolonialism, this thesis concerns itself with specific issues such as colonial discourse, imperialism, diaspora, creole and hybrid identities.

Critics often cannot agree on how to spell ‘post-colonialism,’ with a hyphen (as in post-colonialism) or without (postcolonial). There is a particular reason for the choice of spelling and it concerns the different meanings of ‘post-colonial’ and ‘postcolonial’. The hyphenated term ‘post-colonial’ seems more appropriate to denote a particular historical period or epoch like those suggested by phrases such as ‘after colonialism,’ ‘after independence,’ or ‘after the end of empire’. In the book *Post-Colonial Studies: Key Concepts* the authors argue:

The interweaving of the two approaches is considerable. ‘Post-colonialism/postcolonialism’ is now used in wide and diverse ways to include the study and analysis of European territorial conquest, the various institutions of European colonialisms, the discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject construction in colonial discourse and the resistance of those subjects, and, most importantly perhaps, the differing responses to such incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies in both pre- and post-independence nations and communities [...] focus on the cultural production of such communities, it is becoming widely used in historical, political, sociological and economic analysis...engage with the impact of European imperialism upon world societies.(Ashcroft: 2009, 187)

However, for a greater part, this thesis will be referring to postcolonialism without a hyphen, not just in terms to strict historical periodisation, but also as referring to disparate forms of ‘representations,’ ‘values’ and ‘reading practices’ which range across both past and present.

In the 1990s postcolonialism became increasingly busy and academically fashionable. Fanon, Bhabha, Ashcroft, Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, Spivak and Edward Said became the focus for much debate and commentary in postcolonialism. In his essay, “The Politics of Literary Postcoloniality,” Aijaz Ahmad provides an elaborate for usage of the terms ‘postcolonial’ and ‘postcoloniality’:

As the term ‘postcolonial’ and ‘postcolonialism’ resurfaced during the 1980’s, this time in literary and cultural theories and in deconstructive forms of history-writing, and as these were then conjoined with newly coined ‘postcoloniality,’ in some usage, the word ‘postcolonial’ still

attempted a periodisation, so as to refer to that which came ‘after colonialism’– but this word ‘postcolonial’ was to be used increasingly not so much for periodisation as for designating some kinds of literary and literary-critical writings, and eventually some history-writing as generically ‘postcolonial’ while, other writings in those some domains of literature, literary criticism and history-writing presumably were not. (in Mongia. *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, 281)

Very basically, and in a literary context, postcolonialism involves one or more of the following. John McLeod in his work *Beginning of Postcolonialism* explains the three elements that postcolonialism entails:

- a. Reading texts produced by writers from countries with a history of colonialism, primarily, those texts which are concerned with the workings and legacy of colonialism in the past or the present.
- b. Reading texts produced by those who have migrated from countries with a history of colonialism or those descended from migrant families, which deal in the main with diaspora experience and its many consequences.
- c. In the light of theories of colonial discourse, re-reading texts produced during colonialism; both those that directly address the experiences of empire, and those that seem not to. (*Beginning of Postcolonialism*, 33)

As per the above three concepts of ‘postcolonialism,’ the Caribbean society and history can be examined in the writings of V S Naipaul, Sam Selvon, George Lamming, C.L.R James, Edward Brathwaite, Earl Lovelace and Carly Phillips. Their writings concentrate on the above three elements, especially in novels of Selvon. His peasant novels– *A Brighter Sun*, *Turn Again Tiger* and *Those who Eat the Cascadura* deal with colonialism, hybridity, creolization and experience of the ‘New World’. In his Moses trilogy– *The Lonely Londoners*, *Moses Ascending* and *Moses Migrating*– diaspora and migration play an important role and they directly address the experience of the Empire.

The Caribbean lives under the postcolonial countries. It has all the aspects and themes of postcolonial literature like ‘colonization,’ ‘decolonization,’ ‘oppressed,’ ‘the native,’ ‘hybridity,’ ‘creolization,’ ‘diaspora,’ ‘multiethnic,’ ‘race,’ ‘trans-

culture,' 'trans-nationalism,' and so on. All these themes are supported by almost all the postcolonial theories. In *The Empire Writes Back*, the authors seek to broaden the scope of the term 'postcolonial' and include all English literary productions by societies affected by colonialism:

We use the term 'post-colonial,' however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present study...So the literatures of African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries, and Sri Lanka are all post-colonial literatures. (*The Empire Writes Back*, 2)

The Caribbean Postcolonial Identity

Slavery and Holocaust play a vital, adversarial role in the history mankind paving the way for the emergence of a large number of movements in the globe. People were displaced and scattered across different places in the world. The question of identity is a much debated and also the most relevant issue in postcolonial and globalized world. "We contain multitudes" (Eric Michael Johnson: 2013), wrote Walt Whitman, referring not to the highly contested diagnosis of dissociative identity disorder. Everybody struggles with the existential questions such as: 'Who am I? Where do I belong?' The Caribbean history bears the influence of slavery, holocaust, indentured labours and the World War II and it witnessed an unprecedented/extraordinary flow of people, capital and technology. This flow began with European colonialism. In the process of colonialism, the colonizers not only conquered and appropriated the indigenous people's lands but also controlled the native people, wealth and resources of the conquered lands or the colonies. The colonizer's settlement in the colonization process involved not only physical occupation of the land and imposition of alien government on the colonized place, but also "mental colonization" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 43). In the context of colonialism, Fanon contends that: "the settler only ends his work of breaking in the native when the later admits loudly and intelligibly the supremacy of the White man's value" (*The Wretched of the Earth*, 43).

There was a movement from the colonizing 'centre' to the colonial 'periphery' and also the other way around. In the concept of 'decolonization,' the movements of

people either due to forced migration or voluntary exiles, the intellectuals from the colonized lands got increased. The past century witnessed large scale ‘displacement’ or ‘dispersal,’ and ‘migration’ of people to the different parts of the world in the postcolonial era. Events such as slavery, Middle Passage, holocaust and the World War II compelled people to ‘dislocate’ from the country or place of their origin (old world) to different places in the world. The displaced people underwent the traumatic experience of ‘non-belonging’ and ‘alienation’ in the ‘new world’. They struggled to ‘re-locate’ and feel at home and experience a sense of ‘homeliness’ in the ‘new world’. The strange/alien feeling forced them to ‘re-locate’ themselves in the ‘new world’. Thus, the ‘new world’ became their real ‘home’ and individuals were thus identified as ‘hybrid’ and ‘creole’ due to linguistic and cultural ‘transformations’.

Today, postcolonialism is an important discipline in cultural and literary studies. In the postcolonial context, Stuart Hall proposes three ideas of identity: “(a) enlightenment subject, (b) sociological subject, and (c) post-modern subject” (*The Question on Cultural Identity*, 597). In other words, the displaced people’s identity can be seen in three forms- social, cultural and psychological. In the Caribbean context, the submerged consciousness plays a very crucial role. The submerged consciousness of broken history focuses on their identity. The works of Selvon, Naipaul, Derek Walcott, Edward Brathwaite, Caryl Phillips and other Caribbean writers have the ‘submerged consciousness’ of the broken past history comprising slavery, Middle Passage, triangular trade, indentured labours and the World Wars.

In the Caribbean, identities are always caught in between the ‘two axes’ (Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora”, 110). The Caribbean people were dragged into migration, slavery, transportation, and colonization. They came predominantly from the African races and when slavery was abolished, it was temporarily represented by indentured labour from the Asian continent. According to Stuart Hall the ‘two axes’ represent the ‘old world’ of the ‘past’ and the ‘new world’ of the ‘present’ experience of the postcolonial conditions. To elucidate the process of identity formation, Hall uses Derrida’s theory of ‘difference’ as support and he looks upon the temporary positioning of identity as ‘strategic and arbitrary’. He writes: “if significant depends upon the endless repositioning of its differential terms, meaning, in any specific instance, depends on the contingent and arbitrary stop” (Patrick, William, *Colonial Discourse*, 397). The Caribbean identities have multi-faces; for

instance, Africans are identified as ‘slaves,’ Europeans as ‘colonizers’ and Asians as ‘indentured labourers’. Hall defines the Caribbean identity as ‘diasporic’. Thus, the Caribbeans are identified as ‘creoles’ in the multi-racial and multi-ethnic society.

The binary identities in the postcolonial context have come into currency with the publication of Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978). Some of the binary identities in use are: the ‘colonizer’ and the ‘colonized’; the ‘master’ and the ‘slave’; the ‘west’ and the ‘rest’; ‘white’ and ‘non-white’; the ‘Orient’ and the ‘Occident’; the ‘self’ and the ‘other,’ the ‘centre’ and the ‘margin’ or ‘periphery’ and so on. Of these, the ‘centre’ and ‘periphery’ and also the ‘other’ and the ‘self’ are much debated concepts in the colonial and postcolonial discourse. The ‘centre’ is treated as home of ‘science,’ ‘civilization’ and ‘development,’ whereas, the colonized forms as the ‘periphery’ and the home of ‘superstition,’ ‘barbarity’ and ‘backwardness’. In the Caribbean context, the binary of ‘master’ and ‘slave’ plays an important role. The postcolonial Caribbean writers draw attention to Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest* while explaining the relationship of ‘master’ and ‘slave’.

Stuart Hall contends: “Identity is never fixed or static; it is fluid and always in process” (“Cultural Identity and Diaspora” in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, 110). Generally, identity is defined as a state of being who or what a person is, his/her distinctiveness that separates him/her from others. In this study an attempt has been made to locate the ‘hybrid’ and ‘creole’ identities in the postcolonial Caribbean. People of various cultures and religious background began to ‘mingle’ and ‘mix’ in the postcolonial era. As a result of ‘globalization’ and unprecedented flow of people, identity in the postcolonial Caribbean has become ‘cultural homogenization,’ ‘hybrid’ and ‘creole’. ‘Hybridity,’ ‘creolization’ and ‘cultural homogenization’ are said to be the result of globalization. The Caribbean identity is one of the mingling of different cultural practices into one uniform cultural practice that does not allow easy identification of the characteristics of many cultures. As people of two or more cultures ‘interact’ and ‘intermingle,’ they lose their individual cultural identities and merge into a one uniform culture than does not show any trace of diversity of different cultures. Stuart Hall explains the Caribbean identity as ‘oneness’: “the oneness, underlaying all the other, more superficial difference, is the truth, the essence of “Caribbeanness” of black experience” (Patrick Williams, *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, 393). Another identity he sees as ‘discontinuous’

points of identification that he explains: “we cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about ‘one experience, one identity’” (in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, 112).

In the postcolonial Caribbean, identity is defined as pluralistic or multi-dimensional. A large number of people have come to the Caribbean from various parts of the world. People from various parts of the world found a home in the Caribbean. Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate, argues that there are several different categories to which an individual simultaneously belongs. Sen explains: “... an American citizen, of Caribbean origin, with African ancestry, a Christian, a liberal, a woman, a vegetarian, a long-distance runner, a historian, a school teacher, a novelist, a feminist, a heterosexual... to all of which this person simultaneous belongs give her a particular identity” (*Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, xiii). The term ‘identity’ is itself problematic and carries many shades of meanings such as ‘search for identity,’ ‘loss of identity,’ or the widely used term ‘identity crisis,’ in the psychological context and so on.

Stuart Hall examines the dilemma of identity and cultural representation in his perspicacious essay “Cultural Identity and Diaspora”. Hall argues:

Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, with the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a ‘production,’ which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. (Mongia, Padmini, *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, 110)

In the above passage, Hall refers to two kinds of identity, initially, identity as ‘being’- that includes a sense of unity and commodity and secondly, identity as ‘becoming’. Here clearly connects Hall’s identity ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ to the process of creolization in the Caribbean context. The identities he speaks about are in relation to diasporic identities. To elucidate the process of identity formation, Hall uses Jacques Derrida’s theory of ‘difference/différance’. For Derrida, ‘difference’ is not exactly ‘otherness’; ‘difference’ becomes ‘*différance*,’ which means that meaning is always deferred for endless ‘signs’ and ‘significations’ (*Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, 112-13). Identities are never fixed. Derrida’s ‘difference’ challenges the fixed binaries

which stabilize meaning and representation, and show how meaning is never finished or completed, but moves on to other extended meanings. Therefore, the process of creolization or creole identity is an ongoing process extending from the 'old world' (past) to the 'new world' (present) both in the social as well as the psychological context. Thus, the process of identity as a creole is not a fixed entity but pluralistic or multi-dimensional process. This study focuses on the creole identity in Selvon's novels where the characters undergo transformation towards creolization in the multi-ethnic and multi-racial Caribbean society.

Stuart Hall, speaking about the aspects of cultural identity in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" contends:

The first position defines cultural identity in terms of one shared culture a sort of collectives 'one true self'... imposed 'selves' which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common... cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which principles as 'one people' this 'oneness' leads the essence of 'Caribbeanness,' of the black experience. (in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, 11)

The notion of Hall's 'selves' 'one people' 'oneness' and 'Caribbeanness' leads to transition of 'new world' and 'new society'. Stuart Hall's notion of cultural identity helps to identify the Caribbean as a 'creole' in the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-social society. In the postcolonial societies, the rediscovery of identity is often the object of what Frantz Fanon called: "passionate research...directed by the secret hope of the discovering beyond the misery of today, beyond self-contempt, resignation and abjuration, some are very beautiful and splendid whose existence rehabilitates us both in regard to ourselves and regard to others" ("On National Culture", in *The Wretched of the Earth*, 170). Particularly in the Caribbean context, Hall says:

Caribbean identities always have to the thought in terms of the dialogic relationship between these two axes the one gives some grounding...continuity with, the past. The second reminds that what share is precisely the experience of a profound discontinuity: the peoples dragged into slavery, transportation, colonization migration came

predominantly from Africa, and when that supply ended it was temporally refreshed by indentured labour from the Asian subcontinent. (“Cultural identity and Diaspora” in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, 113)

Diaspora in the Caribbean Context

A diaspora is the movement or migration of a group of people, such as “those sharing a national and/or ethnic identity, away from an established or ancestral homeland” (*Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures Around the World. Volume I: Overviews and Topics; Volume II: Diaspora Communities*). In a Jewish context, it is usually capitalized and the ‘Diaspora’ refers to the exile of the Jewish people and those Jews living outside ancient Israel. The term ‘diaspora’ is etymologically derived from the Greek term ***diasperien***, from ***dia-***, “across” and -***sperien***, “to sow or scatter seeds”. Diaspora can perhaps be seen as a naming of the other which has historically been referred to displaced communities of people who have been dislocated from their native homeland through the movement of migration, immigration, or exile. (Boyarin, 2006)

The concept of diaspora as used in postcolonial discourse has garnered a recognizable set of discourses intended to mark a distinct shift in the way issues of belonging and citizenship are understood. In that sense, and perhaps ironically, given the way diasporan thought invests in ideas of decentering. The concept of ‘diasporan theory’ is built around polarities, chiefly between diaspora and exile, transnationality and provinciality, the global and the local. In the latter instance, Alison Donnell points out in *Twentieth Century Caribbean Literature*: “the local is evoked by its absence from discourse, as the late twentieth century turn towards the diasporan imaginary functions to erase those who remain within the geographical borders of the nation” (79).

Writers from different generations— George Lamming, Samuel Selvon, Austin Clarke and Claude McKay briefly are from the generation that most critics have identified with exile; and the contemporary writers Edwidge Danticat, Erna Brodber and Jamaica Kincaid; and Beryl Gilroy, they all adopt heteroglossic approaches to highlight the complications of writing from migrant space or diaspora. Each elucidates how belonging to two places at once

produces anxiety around questions such as identity, audience and authority. The writers agonize over questions such as: how is the book to be identified? To whom is it directed? What are the terms on which the writer speaks? Who judges the authenticity of literary speech? Most of the writers write themselves 'explicitly or implicitly' (Huddart, David. *Homi K. Bhabha*, 1) and address these issues, directly evidencing the activism for which Caribbean writers are known. Equally as well, such issues arise from the writers' attempt to negotiate the 'in-betweenness' (Bhabha) of diaspora, their consciousness of belonging to two constituencies at once, one in the regional Caribbean, the other in migrant/diasporan space (*Transnational Negotiations in Caribbean Diasporic Literature*, 9). The basic concern of West Indian novel, whether 'explicit' or 'implicit,' is what it means to be a West Indian. The writer, conscious of his country's history, narrating his own personal experiences but in the West Indian context, tried to bring awareness in the people to become conscious of their national culture and identity. The important theme of West Indian writing is the struggle to define a separate West Indian reality and establish its value as significant and worthwhile.

Diaspora, in reality, is nothing but dislocation and relocation. The entire process of diaspora is encapsulated by these two terms. 'Dislocation and relocation' means a move away from 'original home' and settlement in 'another home,' which makes them 'other'. But in diasporic literature, it means a move towards another destination, perhaps another home. This produces a negative impact that is one of often being caught between a de-territorialization [finding a 'new place']. The characters are placed 'in-between' place and society which is in a liminal situation. They are always thinking about their 'old native land' and also simultaneously about a 'newly situated place and society'. Caribbean writers such as Walcott, Naipaul, Lamming and Selvon works are preoccupied with the themes of 'dislocation' and 'relocation'. A fine example is available in Walcott's poem "A Far Cry from Africa" which explores the theme of 'dislocation' followed by 'relocation':

I who am poisoned with the blood of both,
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?
I who have cursed,
The drunken officer of British rule, how choose

Between this Africa and the English tongue I love? (Walcott, *Collected Poems*)

In Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* (1958), the boy-narrator, who learns of Queen Victoria in school, is given an alternative view of things when an old woman tells him of their past history of slavery and bondage. The 'new' history clashes with what he has learnt in school books. Lamming's powerful prose states this dilemma of exile faced with problems of negotiating multiple histories: "[H]e was very anxious for the old woman. Who put it into her head that she was a slave, she or her mother or her father before her?... The little boy had heard the word for the first time... Thank God, he wasn't ever a slave". (*In the Castle of My Skin*, 57-58)

Caribbean identity today is in-between two diasporic events. The first was due to the globalized nature of the sugar trade, which brought slaves and indentured labourers to these shores. All the ancestors, except the Amerindians, came to these lands with identities that were located elsewhere. Under the necessarily repressive plantation system, the blunt force trauma of exploitation and subjugation, the cultural memories of ancestors were eroded or corrupted. Derek Walcott, a St. Lucian poet and Nobel Prize winner for Literature, sums up this psychological damage feeling in his collection of poems, *Laventille*. Significantly, he dedicated the anthology to Naipaul, the Trinidadian Nobel Prize Laureate. In the closing stanzas of the *Laventille*, Walcott writes:

Something inside is laid wide like a wound,
Some open passage that has cleft the brain,
Some deep, amnesiac blow. We left
Somewhere a life that we never found
Customs and gods that are not born again,
Some crib, some grille of light
Clanged shut on us in bondage, and withheld
Us from that world below us and beyond,
And in its swaddling cerements we're still bound. (*Laventille*, 35)

Naipaul himself has treated what Walcott calls a "deep, amnesiac blow" (*Laventille*, 35), repeatedly in both his fiction and non-fiction. This theme is especially explored in *An Area of Darkness*, which explores the patches of

nothingness within his own cultural identity. Similar sentiments are also expressed in his Nobel Lecture: "... [O]ur ancestral faith receded, became mysterious, not pertinent to our day-to-day life. We made no inquiries about India or about the families people had left behind. When our ways of thinking had changed, and we wished to know, it was too late." It may be argued that this loss of identity was essential towards setting the stage for the tenuous cultural alchemy that was to follow, with its elements of racial pride, metissage (or miscegenation), assimilation, conflict and cooperation.

Hybridity

Hybridity is an abstract notion which means a lot to a few and little to many. It is one of the most promising strands in postcolonial literature. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin in their work *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, explain:

One of the most widely employed and more disputed terms in post-colonial theory, hybridity commonly refers to the creation of new 'transcultural' forms within the content zone produced by colonization... The term refers to the cross-breeding of two species by grafting or cross-pollination to form a third, 'hybrid' species. Hybridization takes many forms; linguistic, cultural, political, racial etc. Linguistic examples include 'pidgin' and 'creole' languages. (118)

Homi Bhabha popularizes the concept, 'hybridity'. The word 'hybridity' originates from the Latin word 'hybrida,' which is used to classify the offspring of a famed sow and a wild boar. A hybrid is something that is mixed, and hybridity is simply a mixture of culture, language, race etc. The term 'hybridity' is associated with the work of Homi K. Bhabha, whose analysis of 'colonizer/colonized' relations stress their interdependence and the mutual construction of their subjectivities.

The examination of the racial complexity in the Caribbean leads automatically to focus on a concept of postcolonial cultural identity through what Homi K. Bhabha calls "hybridity" (*The Location of Culture*: 20). Hybridity is a term which is derived from biological terminology, referring to a "cultural standpoint created by the blending of elements that are neither purely one thing nor the other; but something else besides which contests the terms and territories of both" (Bhabha, *The Location*

of Culture, 28). The term refers to the cultural identity of the postcolonial subject, in this case the uprooted Indian and African communities living in Trinidad, as being a fusion of host and native cultures along with the addition of a dominant and colonizing culture, namely, the white British culture. According to Bhabha, this state is achieved through acts of “mimicry” on the part of postcolonial subjects, who ultimately turn out to be “almost the same but not quite” the same as the members of the colonizing culture (*The Location of Culture*, 87). Hybridization assumes that “the postcolonial culture would consist of ideas, institutions and customs of the colonizer that would be adapted to the local culture and grafted on to it” (Betts, 2004: 115).

In the Caribbean postcolonial societies, hybridity can take the form of a retrieval/revival of a pre-colonial past such as folk or tribal cultural forms and conventions or to adopt contemporary artistic and social production of present day condition of globalization, multiculturalism and transnationalism. A retrieval/revival can be seen as resistance to the colonial inheritance, which is the major aspect of the postcolonial theory. It is pertinent to recall here the definition of hybridity in *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*:

Hybridity has frequently been used in post-colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural ‘exchange’. This use of the term has been widely criticized, since it usually implies negations of neglecting the imbalance and inequality of the power relations... the transformative culture, linguistic and political impacts on both the colonized and the colonizer, it has been regarded as replicative of assimilationist policies by masking or ‘whitewashing’ cultural differences. (119)

In the above definition, the concept of ‘hybridity’ refers to the integration of cultural signs and practices from the colonizing and colonized cultures. The assimilation and adaption of cultural practices, the cross-fertilization of cultures, can be seen as positive, enriching and dynamic, as well as oppressive. Hybridity is also a useful concept for helping to breakdown the false sense that colonial cultures, or colonizing cultures for that matter, are monolithic or have essential unchanging features.

Hybridization mainly arises through migration and diaspora, when the new middle classes and their cultural and social practices become a mixture. It also involves different meanings not only cross-time but also cross-cultural contexts. The

notion of hybridity carries different meanings in different cultures, among different strata within cultures. Critics have defined it variously too. The first and foremost thing is that 'hybridity' is a mixed notion. Though one may not arrive at an exact definition, one can trace its meaning by observing other definitions. *Webster's New Dictionary* defines hybridity as indicative of: "A person produced by the blending of two diverse cultures or traditions, anything of heterogeneous origin or composition and even more generally a composite".

According to *The Standard Dictionary*, "hybridity is a thing derived from the heterogeneous sources or composed of incongruous elements." In linguistic definition, hybridity refers to "a word composed of elements from different languages". It is not only that animals and plants may be seen as hybrid, but people, cultures, tradition and languages also. The millennium volume, *Hybridity and its Discontents*, describes 'hybridity' as "A term for a wide range of social and cultural phenomenon involving mixing [it] has become a key concept within cultures, criticism and post-colonial theory". To Stuart Hall, "'hybridity' is transforming British life", which is influenced by the colonial countries and white culture. In the Caribbean, the mixture of white culture with the colonized people creates 'Caribbeaness' and 'hybrid/creole identity'. Perhaps the most poignant and tragically acute commentary on the hybridity of postcolonial/modern culture came from Edward Said. He discusses 'cultural hybridity' in his *Culture Imperialism*:

No one today is purely *one* thing. Labels like Indian, or Woman, or Muslim, or American are no more than starting points, which is followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or black, or Western, or Oriental. Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities. (336)

By using the term 'cultural hybridity,' Edward Said, Stuart Hall, and Bill Ashcroft indicate that cultures are so mixed up that we are slowly moving towards 'one culture' which will have the components of both the 'East' and the 'West'. Homi Bhabha, who popularizes this term, reads it in a different way. According to Bhabha:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory...may open the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity. ("Cultural Diversity and Cultural difference," *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 155–157)

To Bhabha, 'hybridity' is an 'in-between' term, referring to a 'Third Space' and to ambivalence and mimicry, especially in the context of what might, uneasily, be called the colonial "interface". He calls hybridity a "camouflage" (disguise) and he places hybridity in the disruptive and productive category. Bhabha further explains that it is from hybridity, "newness enters the world" and it is bound up with a process of translating and trans-valuing cultural difference. As in the case of the stereotype, Bhabha believes that hybridity calls into question traditional analyses of colonialism, which tend to merely reverse the terms of colonial knowledge. In an interview entitled "The Third Space", which makes direct connection between colonial discourse and the post-colonial 'Third Space' Bhabha says: "For me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the 'Third' emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'Third space' which enables 'other' positions to emerge" (*The Location of Culture*).

Bhabha says that hybridity is like a liminal state, which belongs simultaneously to both and to neither. In his words of Bhabha it is: "Neither one nor the other but something else besides in between" (*The Location of Culture*, 313). For him, the postcolonial hybrid does not challenge us to disentangle influences like tradition and modernity or to unravel strands of differences. Rather, in the post-colonial, hybrid stands in resistance to such colonization and disarticulations instantiating identity at the same time and is subverted.

Robert Young also defines hybridity. He provides a contradictory and ambivalent meaning to the term hybridity, and suggests that the contribution of colonial discourse analysis, in which concept such as hybridity is couched:

Hybridity in particular shows the connections between the racial categories of the past and the contemporary cultural discourse, it may be

used in different ways, gives differing inflections and apparently discrete references, but it also reiterates and reinforce the dynamics of the same conflicted economy.... There is no single, or correct, concept of hybridity its change as it repeats but it also repeats as it changes. ...

[it] provides a significant framework for that other work by emphasizing that all perspectives on colonialism there and have to deal with a common discursive medicine which was also that of colonialism itself...Colonial discourse analysis can therefore look at the wide variety of texts of colonialism as something more than mere documentation or evidence. (1995: 25, 155)

Thus according to Young, hybridity is a loaded and historically potential term, that changes, yet contains its past within it. He notes how influential the term 'hybridity' was in imperial and colonial discourse in the negative accounts of the union of disparate races. 'Hybridity' thus became, particularly at the turn of the century, an integral part of colonialist discourse on racism. (Bill Ashcroft, *Key Concepts*, 120)

LITERATURE BACKGROUND

Antonio Benitez-Rojo, the Cuban novelist and critic defines the Caribbean literature thus:

In the recent decades we have begun to see a clearer outline to the profile of a group of American nations whose colonial experiences and languages have been different, but which share certain undeniable features, I mean the countries usually called "Caribbean" or "of the Caribbean basin". (*The Repeating Island*, 1996:1)

Benitez-Rojo's phrase, "of the Caribbean basin" suggests the potential to transform of the Caribbean cultures to the 'New world'. The "Caribbean basin" is regarded geographically as an entity comprising the Caribbean islands as well as the coastal areas of the USA, South and Central America. Culturally, the phrase, "Caribbean basin" suggests the 'mingling' and 'assimilation' of different cultures leading towards creolization. However, literary and cultural studies have tended to segment the region into Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanic and similar units, and comparatives of the literatures and cultures of the Caribbean basin are relatively rare. In the Introduction to *The Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse in English* 1986, Paula Burnett writes:

Caribbean literature is, of course, first of all by and for Caribbean people. Like any culture, it gives experience to a particular people's experience. But Caribbean literature is also international in a special sense, both because it is a unique cultural hybrid, and because the Caribbean experience is being lived and explored artistically in Europe and North America as well as in the Caribbean region itself. (1986: xxiii)

These remarks remind us that Caribbean literature is not just literature produced in the Caribbean itself but also in other parts of the world, such as Britain, France, Spain, Canada and the USA, where many people from the Caribbean live today. In a similar sense, "Caribbeaness will always remain beyond the horizon" (Benitez-Rojo, xi) where as its parameters will always remain fluid.

The Caribbean writers may differ in their ways, style and their tropical individuality. They have the spirit of creativity in their writings, as Barbara Howes observed:

One thing they seem to have in common: vitality, a range of talent. A great deal is going on writers of stature have emerged and more are emerging. What Mr. Wickham in a recent article identifies as the essence of the West Indian is 'a quality of intimacy,' an honesty and openness which accords well with the creative spirit; this quality 'is not separatist in intention' he says, 'but arises inevitably from the traffic of a small population living an open life in the bright searching light of the sun. (*From the Green Antilles*, 12)

Caribbean writers' brilliant talent blossomed in the post-war years. Caribbean literature is full of the very earth, air, sea, sand and sun of the islands, the power, the passion, the love, the longing, the heartache, the humour, and above all the dazzling vision of the people and their sheer feeling for life itself. *The Times Literary Supplement* comments on Caribbean writers: "A torrent of literary talent has come surging out of the Caribbean like a Gulf Stream of the spirit earthy, passionate, gay, fantastic, and funny. In short, the Caribbean writers are unmistakably cut from the same cloth" (Vol 87; Issue 1-87, 1). The Caribbean writer, from the microcosm of his island, reaches out beyond it to the macrocosm of the world.

Caribbean literature presents the predicament of a people who are dispossessed resulting from cultural conflicts, economic disparities and tensions emerging from the struggle for political power. The Caribbean scene presents a complicated fabric of divisions and diversities of a society of societies of different cultures, roots and races (Gilkes, Michael. *The West Indian Novel: 1981*). Ralph R. Premdas in his research paper “Ethnicity and Identity in the Caribbean: Decentering a Myth” explains that “The Caribbean region, however, is too fragmented and fractured at all levels of its existence to be cozily enclosed in an all-embracing homogeneous category. In fact, the region is the site of ongoing contests and conflicts by rival claimants who seek an autonomous space of their own”(46). The Caribbean identity is fragmented and fractured because of heterogeneous society. The West Indian society is peopled by indigenous inhabitants, the descendants of African slaves, Indian indentured labourers as well as the descendants of mixed liaisons. West Indian writing of mark is but a twentieth century creation influenced by many Amerindians and Europeans as Caribs have no sense of strong affiliation or loyalty to any particular society, culture or nation. Though much of Caribbean literature is expatriate, it opens new vistas in depicting the crises of West Indian situation with precision and frankness.

In the English-speaking islands, especially in Jamaica, Barbados and the Trinidad, the literary history of the last twenty years has been one of extraordinary developments. It was not until the Second World War that there was brought into focus towards a process that was going on unnoticed all the time and all over the region. This region possessed a light and heart of its own that ought to be seen and heard. It was within the crucible of intellectual compulsion that West Indian literature came into existence. The two giant steps toward forming the necessary climate for the developing writer were taken in 1942: one in London and the other in Barbados. The B.B.C inaugurated, in that year, its ‘Caribbean Voices’ program, ably edited first by Una Marson of Jamaica and later by Henry Swanzy, an English intellectual who contributed much to encourage a whole Caribbean literature-in-progress. In Barbados, the literary magazine, *BIM*, edited by Frank Collymore (*BIM*- a native or inhabitant of Barbados, sometimes referred to as Bimshire) enjoyed an unprecedented longevity. Edward Brathwaite refers to Frank Collymore as “perhaps the greatest of West Indian literary godfathers” (caribbean-beat.com)

In 1943, Edna Manley introduced *FOCUS*, in Jamaica. In 1945, A.J. Seymour brought out the first issue of the British Guianese magazine *Kyk-over-Al* (derived from the name of an Old Dutch fort), which also continued for many years. *Kyk-over-Al* and the *Caribbean Quarterly*, published by the University College of the West Indies in Mona, Jamaica, produced generous special editions devoted to West Indian poetry.

The first fruit of the intellectual revolution-to-be was the appearance in 1949 of “25 poems”, by Derek Walcott, the most remarkable poetic talent the English islands produced; and *A Morning at the Office*, by the Guianese writer, Edgar Mittelholzer. A new art sprang out of the irrevocable changes that swept the West Indies in the last few years. The short stories, essays, plays and poems reflect both contemporary life and a life in store. The present is the trend of the future, where new values will predominate and a new approach to things will be born. In the early stages, the ‘creole’ literary tradition established by the white creoles, a minority group enjoying economic power, got weakened by their cultural allegiance to the metropolis and by an ambivalence towards the islands. The paucity of their literary output and the narrowness of its perspective can be traced for instance, in the deteriorating vision of a fine writer like De Lisser, who moved from the social vision of a novel like *Jane’s Career* towards exotic romances such as *The White Witch of Rosehall*.

Poets like James Grainger (1723-1765) and M.J. Chapman (1833) wrote without much of a West Indian context, perspective or tradition. Only the Black poet, Francis Williams, moved perhaps by his own inner tensions, seemed to have seen poetry as a means of voicing personal conflicts and social dilemmas. The emergence of a politically aware and socially conscious literary tradition, it seemed, had to await improvements in West Indian popular education and the rise of Nationalism. Accordingly, during the years between 1937, when widespread rioting and strike broke out on the islands leading to labour unrests and demands for self determination, and 1962 when the West Indian Federation broke up, constitute the most active and vigorous in the literary history of the islands. They were years of activity and debate, marking the rise of political consciousness in the West Indies and the popular anti-colonial agitation which heralded demands for social and political change. The emergence of the ‘Beacon Group,’ a radical, political and creative set of writers participated actively in the labour movement and identified with the independence

struggle, gave a new perspective and urgency to literary activity in the West Indies. For, these activists were also poets, novelists, short story writers and historians who saw their writing as part of the anti-colonial struggle and of the new sensitivity to economic and social relations. Alfred Mendes's *Pitch Lake* (1934) and *Black Fauns* (1935), and C.L.R. James's *Minty Alley* (1936) widened the West Indian perspective by raising questions about the colonial society and giving new depths to the social realism which had informed earlier novels like De Lisser's *Jane's Career*. *Pitch Lake*, for instance, flayed the hollow, spiritually impoverished world of the middle class Portuguese in Trinidad.

In poetry, the increased self-consciousness and social awareness were reflected in literary dimensions especially in the poetry of Una Marson and A.J. Seymour in which, for the first time, the clichés of the pastoral tradition gave way to personal exploration and political statement. This vigorous literary activity took place in the atmosphere of a new critical interest in canons and standards. The nature and character of the emerging literature were being debated and defined in the new literary journals of the time, and the ongoing interest in the creole language, in the traditional of the folk and in West Indian historiography, was helping to widen the scope of the debate.

It was against the backdrop of political and literary context that V.S. Reid's *New Day* (1949) emerged, and it is not surprising that it should have recreated the historical past in order to present continuity in the West Indian experience. This historical perspective was part of the mood of the times, part of the growing sense of a separate West Indian entity and experience. The sense of isolation was not really new in West Indian thought. Jamaican settlers and planters had persistently asserted the distinctiveness of their society and its institutions far back in the eighteenth century. They had often jealously safeguarded the autonomy and integrity of their legislative Assembly and even conceived of an internal autonomous Jamaica within the wider framework of the Empire. But, this sense of 'identity' was frequently obscured by ambiguities and dichotomies. Often, their natural wish for autonomy conflicted with their contempt for the colonial society and the vulgarities of a slave. The impact of colonization complicated the situation by generating a divisive loyalty to the metropolitan culture. Further, the slavery inhibited their attitudes to the whole idea of freedom, creating a neurotic fear of an enfranchised slave population, and ultimately

stifling their aspirations for national independence. For, the slave was not seen then as a force in history, being neither a maker nor a creator of history. Reid's perspective was thus both the continuation of a trend and a widening of its implications. For the first time, an imaginative writer had placed the West Indian black in the context of West Indian 'history'. He had rescued him/her from anonymity and made his/her experience and inner reality a part of the West Indian aspiration for natural freedom. J.J. Thomas, the West Indian scholar admittedly argued the validity of 'negro' history in the West Indies a long while ago, in *Froudacity* (1889). Mittelholzer dramatized in almost epic proportion the evolution of Guianese colonial and slave society in the Kaywana trilogy. But, Reid's novel was a development on these, especially in the way it created a particular West Indian sensibility shaped by the peasant environment and way of life of the emancipated slave. But in a sense, Reid's novel was also ironically a reflection of the ambivalence of the nationalist thinking of the time, of its self-assertion and self-consciousness, on the one hand, and on the other, its dependence upon the guidance and goodwill of the metropolis.

The literature of the 1950s and 1960s was a more rigorous examination of the colonial experience, combining an anti-colonial perspective with a search for new definitions and values. In Guyana, Martin Carter's *Poems of Resistance* (1954) established a strident anti-colonial voice as part of political statement and protest, while his later poetry examined the nature of colonial society and the colonial psyche. The past was again being recreated but in fictional form, in more imaginative terms that gave writers the leeway to explore the complex consequences of the region's history. The other novelists revealed the reality of the West Indian man in ways that no conventional history could have managed. V.S. Reid, who had earlier charted the progress of the West Indian experience and sensibility by exploring real history, now examined the emotional and spiritual tensions of colonial relations through a less restricting and inhibiting medium in *The Leopard*. In Jamaica, John Hearne reacted in a similar way to the consequence of history exposing the precariousness and vulnerability of middle class values in his novels like *Strangers at the Gate*, *The Face of Love* and *Voices Under the Window*. In Trinidad, V.S. Naipaul and Samuel Selvon assessed the costs and gains of the 'creolization' of the East Indian in *A Brighter Sun* and *A House for Mr. Biswas* respectively. In both the novels, explorations centered on the creolization of the East Indian on the nature and their adjustment in the colonial

society. Indian characters moved from enclosed peasant worlds into the wider colonial world, and the movement was in both novels an exploration and a growth in awareness and sensibility, though for Naipaul more than for Selvon, the possibilities for wholeness, fulfillment and achievement were lessened by the very circumstances of the colonial experience.

Selvon's *A Brighter Sun* (1952) and *Turn Again Tiger* (1958) contributed to the tradition of the West Indian novel through their use of local speech, delineation of social problems, and sense of comedy. Selvon created characters who seemed typical and representative of the Caribbean postcolonial society even when writing of the loners, hustlers and other exiles on the fringe of West Indian society in England, in *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), *Moses Ascending* and *Moses Migrating*. He was among the first to capture the picaresque quality sometimes characteristic of West Indian lives. His sensitivity and gaiety led him, as it were, straight to the heart of his characters. The concern with transition and social evolution was not just a concern with progress and growth, but it was also an attempt to capture the very meaning and significance of a West Indian world, and this was part of the inspiration behind the proliferation of novels of childhood during this time. Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack Monkey*, Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*, Michael Anthony's *The year in San Fernando*, Drayton's *Christopher* and Ian McDonald's *The Humming Bird Tree* were all in part attempts at capturing and savouring of the essence of West Indian life through the developing consciousness of the child. Somehow, the discovery and identity with this world seemed better and more truthfully revealed through the impressions of the growing child.

In the 1960s, a similar pre-occupation with meaning and significance underlied Wilson Harris' intense explorations of the impact of history on the West Indian personality. His novels, especially *The Guiana Quartet*, recreated the various aberrations of history in the consciousness of both the oppressor and his victim. The novels enact not only just the linear drama of conquest and defeat but also the dualities and paradoxes of the confrontation, as well as the possibilities of rebirth, reconciliation and a new community.

During this vigorous period of West Indian literary activity, the social world, even in its negative manifestation in the slum, was an object of exploration. Roger Mais' *The Hills Were Joyful Together* (1953) and *Brother Man* (1954) limited

themselves to the conditions of the slum, evoking its deprivations, poverty, frustration and waste as evidence of rural dispossession and urbanization. These worlds were not the changing and developing worlds of Naipaul, Selvon and Lamming: They were the static enclaves of the urban castaways, those whom industrialization had flushed out and abandoned. Roger Mais sought to highlight the social neglect of the slums while at the same time revealing the indomitable will of the people and the healing unifying power of the communal spirit. In the early 1960s, Orlando Patterson was to evoke the same background in the *Children of Sisyphus* (1964), demonstrating the same social concern but revealing frustration and escapism as the ultimate absurdity of the West Indian condition.

The exciting progress of form, theme and vision in the West Indian novel did not always move in tendency with the region's poetry. In the 1940s and 1950s, West Indian poets and dramatists lagged behind the novelists. They were still groping for distinctive voices. They had not acquired the depth of theme and authority of vision that the novelists had achieved. Claude McKay's experiments with dialect and folk forms in the 1920s and his articulation of the divided Afro-Caribbean consciousness in poems like 'outcast' offered significant directions, but it was not until the 1960s with the poetry of Louise Bennett, Eric Roach, Derek Walcott and Edward Brathwaite. These forms and themes began to be handled with maturity and complexity. Walcott grappled with themes of displacement and spiritual impoverishment in *The Castaway* and looked for ways in which the artist could transcend these in his effort to be creative. In his poems he captures the theme of hybridity, displacement and liminal situation. However, for all his cynicism and despair, he did manage to retain a sense of the possibilities of the poetic experience and to progress through "The Gulf" and "Another Life". His poems reflected towards a view of the artist as capable of freeing his people by returning them unto themselves through the very act of naming them, of capturing their lives, their landscape and their language. Accordingly, his experiments in the Trinidad workshop with dialect, folk forms and folk mythologies in plays like *The Sea at Dauphin*, *T-Jean and His Brothers* and *Dream on Monkey Mountain* helped to establish a most vibrant tradition in West Indian drama, thereby realizing his hopes of making 'heraldic men' out of 'foresters and fishermen' (Baugh, Edward, "Of Men and Heroes: Walcott and the Haitian Revolution" *Callaloo*, 45-54).

In West Indian literature, the themes of anti-imperialism and nationalism were part of the cultural nationalism which was its manifestation. The consciousness of a West Indian people with a history, character and aspirations separate from the metropolis was an underlining ideology in the nationalist movement and the literature of the mid-twentieth century. The novels show a new interest in history, in the historical process and in the continuity of historical experience, marked a new West Indian awareness, which was a challenge to nineteenth century assumptions about the historylessness of the region. V.S. Reid's *New Day*, Samuel Selvon's *A Brighter Sun* and Roger Mais's *The Hills were Joyful Together* were all attempts at creating this distinctive experience and character. Selvon's *Turn Again Tiger* recreates the environment and social content of the colonial plantation, complete with its hierarchy of white supervisor, overseer, time-keeper and labourers. The protagonist's confrontation with the situation and its normal and psychological reflections becomes an examination of his own relationship with the colonial experience. The mere process of creolization, Selvon implies, is finally not the whole answer to the quest for freedom and creolization. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men* examines the relationship between the colonial experience and nationalist assertion in the West Indies, showing how freedom itself is limited and impaired by the permanent disabilities of the colonial experience. George Lamming's *Of Age and Innocence* (1958) explores the pitfalls and failure of nationalist aspiration in the West Indies. Carefully plotted to reflect the multi-racial and multi-cultural complexity of the West Indies, it dramatizes the historical disabilities which West Indians must overcome in order to achieve true unity and freedom.

The West Indian literature nurtured by political subjugation, cultural disinheritance, social disintegration and psychological dehumanization quite naturally became an expression of unrequited suffering, bewilderment, disillusionment, and irrepressible rage. West Indian identity and culture began with earlier writers like Claude McKay, C.L.R. James and Sam Selvon who raised the question of the role of heredity itself, the phenomenon of racial admixture, and the cultural disorientation which lay beneath the West Indian's deep psychological need to define racial and cultural identity. Selvon's concern as a writer lay deeper than social protest, especially in the novel *The Lonely Londoners*.

In spite of physical isolation and sovereignty, West Indian literature invariably speaks of the common experience of slavery, colonization, displacement, emancipation and nationalism that helped in the creation of socio-political and cultural environment and to bring people together in order to establish its cultural and literary identity as well. West Indian literature also traces the history of the country spanning the significant events right from the inception of the present century and depicts the progress made by the country in the recent past.

West Indian novel, springing from the Caribbean resistance, emerged as an 'essay' in self-assertion. West Indians discovered the novel as a way of investigation and also of projecting the inner experience of their community, which is one of the most important events in the Caribbean literary history. What the West Indian writer attempted, with notable success, is to tell the tale of his land from the inside. Edgar Mittelholzer, Vic Reid, Samuel Selvon, Roger Mais and George Lamming are some of the earliest pioneers educated in the British tradition and voiced an essentially West Indian experience in their works.

Since the West Indies is a world that is irreversibly plural, culturally and socially, its writers have to transcend their own culture of origin by avoiding cultural prejudice or particularity. Though, the West Indians have a view to proposing harmonious coexistence of cultures by mutual sharing of what is convergent and in mutual respect for what is divergent. Selvon's fiction is, therefore, "governed by a profound sense of plurality that serves his vision of the world as a global phenomenon. It vividly offers a better understanding of the concepts of displacements, hybridity, creolization and metamorphosis" (Nasta, Susheila, 1988).

The major focus of West Indian fiction was on the social, psychological, and cultural aftermath of historical events, such as the European conquest, the Middle Passage, the slavery system and indentured labour. In undertaking this socio-cultural study of Caribbean migrant and diaspora fiction responds to the general trend in migration discourse that presents the Caribbean experience as unidirectional and uniform across the geographical spaces of the region and its diaspora. The Caribbean diaspora and the massive waves of migration from the region that punctuated its history requires not merely understanding the communities in migrant locations and the conflicted identities of second generation migrant subjectivities, but also interpreting how these communities interrelate with, affect

and are affected by communities in the region itself. Therefore a rethinking of the “Caribbean diaspora not in deterritorialized terms, but with attention to issues of regional sovereignty and national identity as much as issues of diasporan belonging” (*Transnational Negotiations in Caribbean Diasporic Literature*, 1).

The theme of childhood, and with it, the idea of growth from innocence to maturity, was a recurrent theme in West Indian literature. In all the novels about childhood, the child protagonist is almost always engaged in recording the impact of a particular environment or experience. Michael Anthony’s two novels, *The Year In San Fernando* (1965) and *Green Days By The River* are about a child’s progress through a particular world, similarly, in Merle Hodge’s *Crick Crack Monkey*, the young heroine’s experiences are crucial both for her personal development and as an illustration of the novel’s theme of cultural confusion and insecurity. In Lamming and Selvon, the world of childhood and school became a part of the colonial ethos and of the general disintegration evoked and dramatized in Naipaul’s *In the Castle of My Skin* and Selvon’s *A Brighter Sun*. The boy narrator in Naipaul’s *Miguel Street* presents entire areas of a child’s perception which are opened simply through his perception of people around him. School is the basic institution where younger minds obtain education of society. Racism is ingrained in the school education through the process of calling students by their names and identifying them through the names. In *A Brighter Sun*, Henry, Rita’s sister’s son, and the bully of the school, stops Ling, Tall Boy’s son, and mocks him. There is a full fledged name calling session in the school that does not exclude any race:

[...] When it was recess- a mid-morning break of ten or fifteen minutes- they gathered around the Chinese [children] and sang:

“Chinese, Chinese, never die,

Flat nose and Chinky eye!”

But Ling was no coward [...] He put his hands to his ears to shout out their voice and he sang:

“Nigger is ah nation,

By full of bodderation,

Meet them by de station,

By stink with perspiration!”

Then he turned to the Indians, “Everybody know ally does use ah bottle water in de W.C.Ha ha!”

“Chinese does eat an dog!”

“Nigger does smell of perspiration!”

“Coolie people does eat with dey hands!”

[...] Whitey cockroach!”

[...] “Black tar – baby!” (*A Brighter Sun*, 55-56).

Samuel Dickson Selvon and His Works

Samuel Dickson Selvon, the son of an Indian father and a half-Indian, half-Scottish mother, was born in 1923 in South Trinidad. He graduated from San Fernando’s Naparima College in 1938. Selvon grew up in Trinidad’s multi-racial society, and considers himself as a creolized West Indian. After a brief career in journalism in Trinidad, he migrated to the United Kingdom in 1950 and two years later he gained renown attention with the publication of *A Brighter Sun*. Selvon began writing while he was performing his military service in the Royal Navy Reserve during the World War II, and became the fiction editor for the newspaper, *Trinidad Guardian*, after the war. He worked with the BBC in England during the 1960s and 1970s, and produced many radio programs and a film version of his book, *The Lonely Londoners*. Selvon’s lifetime works include the following books: *A Brighter Sun* (1952), *An Island is a World* (1955), *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), *Ways of Sunlight* (1957), *Turn Again Tiger* (1958), *I Hear Thunder* (1963), *The Housing Lark* (1965), *A Drink of Water* (1968), *The Plains of Caroni* (1970), *Those Who Eat the Cascadura* (1972), *Moses Ascending* (1975), *Moses Migrating* (1983), and *Foreday Morning: Selected Prose* (1989), a collection of selected prose written between 1946-1986.

After the Second World War, Selvon became a journalist for *The Trinidad Guardian* and fiction editor of *The Guardian Weekly*, a literary magazine devoted to creative writing. A self-educated man, Selvon believed, right from childhood, that literature had an educative role and served as an important medium for imaginative exploration and self-discovery. Selvon contributed a number of poems, short stories and articles to Caribbean literary magazines, such as *BIM*, the pioneering Barbadian journal.

Rationale for Selecting Selvon

Samuel Selvon is counted as one of the literary giants in the English speaking Caribbean, and his works form an integral part of the Caribbean diasporic literature. His works are studied by researchers and integral students at both secondary and tertiary levels. Salick, Royndon (2001) correctly argues that “the bulk of Selvon criticism focuses primarily and generally on his style, too often emphasizing style and neglecting all other aspects of his fiction” (*The Novels of Samuel Selvon: A Critical Study*). The exploration of themes such as colonialism, independence, migration, racial identity, hybrid identity, Caribbean language (Creole), and community life have resonated with those who read his works. Looker, Mark (1996) states that in “Selvon’s fiction various histories collide; local and imperial, rural, urban, popular and elite” (*Atlantic Passages: History, Community, and Language in the Fiction of Sam Selvon*, 2).

The eloquence and charm of Selvon’s work provoke an ongoing curiosity among scholarly critics and reviewers. Selvon’s novels capture various aspects of the historical and social experiences of the people of his native land; in addition, he is a very creative writer in Caribbean literature. Indeed, Kenneth Ramchand in one of his essays examines Selvon as a revolutionary writer who is concerned more with social, cultural and political issues in his writings. Kenneth Ramchand also describes Selvon’s creative writing and his uniqueness:

Selvon was a revolutionary in form and style, as well as in a social sense. The social and the writing stance are inseparable. He engaged not with the economic and political powers, not with the military or the police, but with the very source of our strength and creativity: he was one of the first writers in the region to take it for granted in his fictions and thus make it natural for his readers to do so both in life and in fiction that the ordinary person in the Caribbean is not an object or tool, but a human being. (JSTORE: “Celebrating Selvon”, 49)

Selvon’s writings transcend cultural borders at a time when West Indians had little or no channel to express their unique speech patterns; he captured the migrant’s sense of humor. James, Louis (1999) confirms and supports the pioneering role that Selvon played in the Anglo-Caribbean diasporic movement with the admission that “the first

major novel of Trinidad development was Sam Selvon's *A Brighter Sun*" (*Caribbean Literature in English*, 70).

In recognition of his literary accomplishment Selvon received a number of awards, including two *Guggenheim Fellowships* (1955, 1968), *Trinidad and Tobago Hummingbird Gold Medal* for Literature (1969), and Best Novel Award from the *Writers Guild of Alberta* for his novel *Moses Ascending* (1983). Selvon was also the recipient of an honorary doctorate from the University of Warwick (1989) and a gold medal, awarded for literature posthumously by *Trinidad and Tobago Chaconia* in 1995. In 1978, he moved to Alberta, Canada, where he was a writer in residence at the University of Winnipeg. Selvon died on April 16, 1994 during one of his regular visits to Trinidad and Tobago.

Selvon described his emigration to London in 1950 to seek employment as 'a kind of adventure'. West Indians, including Selvon and Lamming, flocked to Britain in the 1950s in search of good life, a decent one, and a 'better-break'. The directionless complacency of middle-class life in Trinidad, Selvon significance of his expatriation as George Lamming records in *The Pleasure of Exile* (1960). Virtually every important writer, Lamming writes, seems to have felt the need to 'get out,' to leave the island of his childhood, and escape to the 'cultured' metropolitan atmosphere of London, where his art could develop and gain recognition (Susheila Nasta, *Critical Perspectives on Sam Selvon*, 2).

Selvon emerged as a freelance writer in the 1950s in London and began contributing stories and reviews to British journals and newspapers such as *The London Magazine*, *The Evergreen Review*, *The Evening Standard* and *The Sunday Times*. Selvon published *An Island is a World* in 1955. In the same year he was awarded his first Guggenheim Fellowship. Selvon's early novels– *A Brighter Sun* (1952), *An Island is a World* (1954) and his classic novel of exile *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) followed by the collection of short stories set both in Trinidad and London, compiled in *Ways of Sunlight* (1957) - all of the first decade of his emigration marked the end of the first phase of Selvon's sojourn in London. He received the Trinidad Government Scholarship in 1963 and returned home. The same year he published *I Hear Thunder*, followed by *The Housing Lark* in 1965. In 1968, he was awarded the *Guggenheim Fellowship* for a second time. He frequented the small rural village of Tacarigua, which figured in the *Plains of Caroni* (1970), the

only novel written completely in Trinidad. *Those who Eat the Cascadura* (1972) too shares the same village setting. He was also awarded the Trinidadian literary prize, the *Hummingbird Medal* for literature, in the same year.

Selvon's well-known novel *A Brighter Sun* is a semi-autobiographical novel. It has the themes of creolization process, community life, colonial education system, racism and other postcolonial concepts. *Times Literary Supplement* described *A Brighter Sun* (1989):

Selvon's autobiographical novel, is set in the suburban village namely Barataria in Trinidad [...] a first novel of remarkable quality [...] a poetic, amusing and frequently touching portrait of a community, living against a background of dramatic events, but for whom the real drama is the struggle for education, for a living and most of all, for some clue to the meaning of their existence. (*A Brighter Sun*, cover page)

The novel, *A Brighter Sun* deals primarily with the personal, social and racial problems of Tiger, a newly married Indian, who with his child-bride Urmilla, leaves his peasant family in the Chanaguas sugar-cane area, to live with the suburban Barataria community. At the time of marriage, the sixteen year old Tiger is offered a cow and a hut in Barataria and two hundred dollars cash besides other things. Ramlal, an old Indian peasant, one of the last groups of indentured labourers, often consoles Tiger when he is beaten by his mother or father. He maps out Tiger's entire destiny: "You gettam house which side Barataria, gettam land, cow-well you go live dat side. Haveam plenty boy chile-girl chile no good only bring trouble on yuh head. You live dat side, plantam garden, live good" (*A Brighter Sun*, 7). Tiger is a newly married and started his new life with Urmilla in Barataria. His father gives some basic necessary things to lead his new life and wishes his son to lead a prosperous life. The whole novel revolves around Tiger's physical and mental growth in a multi-racial society and it also shows his awareness regarding the process of creolization.

Tiger sets off to Barataria without knowing where it is to seek his independence and manhood. *A Brighter Sun* explores Tiger's growing consciousness. Its major theme is initiation of Tiger into manhood, creolization and socio awareness through his own experience and self-education. This is done through gentle humour and the sympathetic portrayal of a rural community at a time of rapid change in the

society. Tiger's story has to be viewed in historical perspective. It sets in the wider context of the island and other progressive creole couples like Joe and Rita Martin. The novel is concerned with Tiger's quest for manhood, and it also deals with the process of creolization which Tiger and his wife, Urmilla, undergo in multiracial Barataria. Tiger and Urmilla are uninfluenced by their parents in the regard of creolization process. Tiger's creolization is greatly accelerated by his newly acquired literacy and growing social consciousness that recognizes the interrelationship of groups within Trinidad's larger multi-racial society. The creole couple, Joe and Rita, prove themselves to be the best of neighbours to the inexperienced Tiger and Urmilla. *A Brighter Sun*, like Edgar Mittelholzer's *Corentyne Thunder*, published eleven years before, is a novel which revolves around the lives Indo-Caribbean peasants, who maintain an intimate relationship with nature and the land. Selvon may very well have been "influenced by Edgar Mittelholzer's somewhat sensationalistic novel" (Royndon Salick, 16).

A Brighter Sun illustrates Tiger's career. He acquires greater maturity as he gradually becomes aware of the need for national identity in Trinidad. Tiger's progressively maturing career forms, or is intended to form, the theoretical pattern of a 'bildungsroman' in which each experience contributes, stage by stage, to this emotional and intellectual growth. In the end, he becomes aware of the need for social and cultural unity as a creolization process. Despite the racial differences illustrated, there are hints of a wider, all embracing Trinidadian outlook, that would confirm the possibility of a truly cohesive community.

The novel ends in a matter of fact manner. Tiger mutters by gazing at the sky: "Now is a good time to plant corn" (*A Brighter Sun*, 215). Tiger is determined to improve his prospects economically and educationally. He is firmly committed to the land as the source of an undefined but undoubtedly certain strength. Tiger is offered to the reader as a symbol of the Trinidadian native's conscious dream of escaping from his misery and ignorance. Tiger wants to transcend the kind of awareness represented by the Indian or the Negro. This is the hub around which all the other issues in the novel turn.

A Brighter Sun explores the 'New World' experience of Trinidad's Indian community in a state of transition, growing away from its beginnings on the sugar plantation and confronting the inevitable process of 'creolization' and urbanization.

Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953) is also concerned with transition occurring as consequence of the feudal structure of the plantation giving way to the pressures of organized labour and the first stirrings of freedom movement, leading to displacement, dispossession and alienation.

Turn Again Tiger (1958) is a somewhat an unexpected sequel to *A Brighter Sun*. Royndon Salick contends, "the sequel is necessary to fill the many gaps in the narrative of *A Brighter Sun*. Although Tiger has traveled far on the road to knowledge and self-assurance, we sense that he still has a long way to go" (*The Novels of Samuel Selvon*, 32). Tiger, the chief character, remains the same and the themes of the earlier work are extended here as well. In *Turn Again Tiger*, Selvon re-examines Tiger's quest for manhood and growth within the shifting spectrum of 'creolization'. *Turn Again Tiger* emphasizes on Tiger's need to reconcile himself with his peasant roots in the cane community as a vital and necessary grounding. In this novel, Selvon narrates Tiger's return to a sugarcane estate, this time in Five Rivers, where Babolal, Tiger's illiterate father, needs Tiger's help in order to manage an experimental cane project. Tiger finds himself involved in rural exploitation again, though only as a time keeper. He is now armed with the literacy and social consciousness, acquired at Barataria, to analyze the situation of field-workers who totally depended on the cane industry. With Five Rivers as a belated example of the long tyranny of sugarcane, the novel explores this serfdom as a legacy of the colonial past. In this circumscribed world, a strict hierarchy prevails from white supervisor downward to overseers, Chinese shopkeepers and illiterate Indian labourers.

The novel opens with the planting of cane and closes at the time of harvesting. Tiger goes through this season in hell with a resolve to explore and transcend the memory of the life forgotten, of exploitation symbolized by the overseer with horse and whip, and the power dynamics. It is significant that Tiger's sexual encounter with Doreen, the wife of white master Mr. Robinson, when it finally occurs on Doreen's initiative, is meant as an act of violence on Tiger's part. There is no tenderness, no single gesture of affection that might sentimentalize their passion. The meeting with Doreen has a lot of colonial and racial complication. It is in part a reversal of the white overseer/Indian girl relationship that haunts Tiger's memories of Chaguanas.

The theme of sexuality and violence play an important role in the postcolonial writers. The colonial sexual politics is the major theme in the novels of Selvon and

Toni Morrison. Toni Morrison, an Afro-American writer, in her novel *The Bluest Eye*, tries to locate postcolonial black identity in the socio-political ground where cultures are hybridized, powers are negotiated, and individuals are reproduced as resistant agents, for instance, in Selvon's *Turn Again Tiger*. On the other, just 'being black' in the novels of Selvon and Morrison do not promote unity within the community as there also exists radicalization and class differences within the black collective. So through their characters, Selvon and Morrison portray the dehumanization brought by slavery and racism. Both the writers depict the theme of alienation and marginalization of the black in white society. They analyze how the black race is treated like animals during the time zone depicted in their novels. Fanon also portrays such dehumanization in his *Black Skin, White Masks*:

The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it's cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother's arms: Mama, the nigger's going to eat me up. (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 113)

Turn Again Tiger and *The Bluest Eye* provide an extended depiction of the ways in which internalized white beauty standards deform the lives of black girls and women. Implicit messages are everywhere by emphasizing the 'superiority' of the white race. In the novel *The Bluest Eye*, whiteness is associated not only with beauty and cleanliness (particularly, according to Geraldine and Mrs. Breedlove), but also with sterility. In contrast, colour is associated with happiness, most clearly in the rainbow of yellow, green, and purple memories Pauline Breedlove sees when making love with Cholly. Morrison uses this imagery to emphasize the destructiveness of the black community's privileging of whiteness and to suggest that vibrant colour, rather than the pure absence of colour, is a stronger image of freedom and happiness.

Tiger's symbolical cleansing of himself in the pool after his sexual encounter with Doreen shows his expurgation of the weakness in himself that remained vulnerable to the white woman representing white power. More than a private crisis, Tiger's conflict represents the psychological plight which plagues the island as a

lingering sequel of colonization. Similarly, the father-son opposition stems from their different conceptions of a worker's nature. Tiger is filled with joy when his father, an expert foreman but too ready to tow to whites, regains self confidence and dignity at harvesting time. Conversely, through daily contact with field hands, Tiger loses his feeling of superiority. The other characters also gradually assume greater importance: the Chinese shopkeeper triumphs over Singh who had taken his wife in the canfield; More Lazy, the itinerant entertainer, is redefined as a harvester. Old Man Soylo, a former foreman who hated sugarcane field since his son had been a victim of burning it before harvest, becomes Tiger's mentor and finally rejoins the community again. Traditionally cast as subservient to the male world, women are now recognized as forces in the community. No longer a child bride, Urmilla competently supports her husband and emerges as a strong, sensitive personality even more aware than Tiger. She becomes a symbol of fertility; at the end of the novel Tiger computes the many benefits of the season: "Urmilla was bearing another child, perhaps the greatest thing of all" (*Turn Again Tiger*, 181).

In *Turn Again Tiger*, Selvon refocuses his examination of Tiger's quest for manhood and growth within the 'shifting' spectrum of 'creolization'. Creolization and self-education at Barataria had somewhat estranged Tiger from his roots. He never renounces his growth of awareness but, in the cane field, he acquires a humbler sense of belonging and a new psychic integrity which will enable him to become a community leader upon his return to the city. A true ritual in rebirth, the season in the cane fields takes him away from the cycle of anguish historically linked with cane, and prevents him from perpetuating the cycle of exile. Hence, Tiger's relation to his folk origins is never romanticized. On the one hand, a balance is created between the sympathetic rendering of the hero's inner life, and, the essentially comic depiction of episodes involving minor characters. On the other hand, as Sandra Paquet very accurately remarks: "Selvon's aesthetics are close to the calypso tradition with its delight in melodrama, its male chauvinistic view of women and its preoccupation with racial stereotypes" (*Turn Again Tiger*, xxi).

An Island is A World (1955) is a more ambitious, socially-oriented and politically conscious novel. It is a sequel to, and a development on, *A Brighter Sun*. Its topical interest becomes clear when one recalls that a federation of the West Indies was then under discussion and its articulateness is all the more aesthetically fitting as

it deals with a better-educated segment of the Trinidadian population. The novel explores varied responses to the divisive tensions and the lack of clear cultural identity that plague the island. As in *A Brighter Sun*, contrastive delineation is used, setting off the middle class Foster against the lazy, rum-addicted Johnny, an Indian who waits for the 'Big Invention' that will make him rich.

An Island is A World is both a continuation of *A Brighter Sun* and a departure from it. The depiction of the hero, struggling to find meaning and knowledge, expressed through the archetype of the journey, first established in *A Brighter Sun*, is developed in different ways in *An Island is A World* (Salick, Royndon, 77). Selvon feels more hesitant now to write about such a huge and complex country as the United States because he knows it better. Although his 1954 sojourn there lends as much credibility to Rufus' response to the ice-bound, provincial Midwest as Selvon's London experiences do to Foster's impressions. Stylistically, the novel evinces a clever but sometimes artificial use of contrastive devices. *An Island Is A World* shows a wider linguistic range than *A Brighter Sun*.

Those Who Eat The Cascadura (1972), according to Michel Fabre, is more "remarkable than *The Plains of Caroni*. *Those Who Eat The Cascadura* resembles *The Plain of Caroni* either much more than it resembles *A Brighter Sun* and *Turn Again Tiger*" (Salick, Royndon, 62). Selvon treated no other plot in so many different forms. He first published a short story in Trinidad in the forties, then a novella and later a collection of short stories, *Ways of Sunlight*, and then a play, which was broadcast by the B.B.C. He finally produced a novel in 1969 using as background the village life he had experienced at Tacarigua. The novel, *Those Who Eat The Cascadura* is noticeably different from the story, both in plot and perspective. In the short story, the first person narrator is the overseer of the Franklin cocoa plantation at Sangre Grande. He repeatedly asserts his neutrality as an observer; he trusts the whites and suffers in silence when his beloved Urmilla falls in love with Johnson, an English friend of Franklin's, who suffers from a life-threatening mysterious ailment, and who has come to rest in Trinidad. Johnson becomes interested in such folk superstitions about which old Sookdeo, the Indian watchman, is an authority.

The full-sized novel marks many points more believable or explicit. Gary Johnson is a writer researching into West Indian folkways, which enables Selvon to explore obeah, the black magic in a nearly anthropological fashion without falling

into exoticism. The major change comes from making Prekash, the Indian overseer, into a major protagonist who is so jealous of Johnson that he attempts to rape Sarojini. Inter-racial sexual rivalry is emphasized, but in a more romantic atmosphere than in *Turn Again Tiger*, due, in part, to the important role of local colour. Selvon uses quite adroitly, the love rivalry as a symbol and the hurricane as a metaphor in order to connote wider social tensions. Selvon uses 'love rivalry' between Sarojini and Prekash in an ironical way in the estate called Sans Souci.

I Hear Thunder (1963) deals with the topic of inter-racial marriage. Mark, who has joined the Royal Air Force, returns to home as a doctor with a white wife. This gives rise to much gossip and the female section of the community is flustered. Mark's own mother, a washer-woman full of dignified good sense, is awed by her English daughter-in-law, whom she can only address as 'Madam'. She refuses to leave her familiar environment in a village so as to share her son's new large house. Mark's social achievement estranges him from his mother. More generally, the moral of the novel, *I Hear Thunder* exposes the predicament of someone educated away from home and returning after a period of growth through trials abroad. With his big job in San Fernando, Adrian is to some extent Frank's local double and both are contrasted with the native figure of Ramdeen, who never attended school and who remains awestruck by the mysteries of education. When Frank tries to re-identify with his people, his marriage to an alien compounds his problems. As a consequence, his marriage with Joe compounds his difficulties and their marriage, although not actually destroyed, suffers. The title "I Hear Thunder", borrowed from a nursery rhyme, evokes the ominous rumblings of a distant storm, symbolizing the hardships to be weathered in the course of the novel.

The Plains of Caroni (1970) is Selvon's only novel to be written wholly in Trinidad. This novel deals with the peasants' opposition to mechanization. When the new cane harvester arrives, Romesh, fresh from the university, is the only one to welcome it. His companions and his family oppose it. His uncle Balgobin, champion of cane-cutting, damages the engine beyond repair with his 'poya'. Unions and parties side with the people, and the press plays the old story of men against machine for all it is worth. The company's efforts to modernize are thus checked for a while. As important to Romesh as his social concern, however, is his discovery about himself, Seeta, his overly possessive, ambitious mother, gets him involved with Petra,

whose white skin sees as a token of success. When the police examines Romesh, Seeta discloses that he is Balgobin's son, not his nephew, a pre-arranged marriage having prevented Balgobin from marrying her. Nearly mobbed as a 'white Indian,' Romesh makes a narrow escape thanks to Petra who seems willing to take his destiny into her hands, and they immigrate to London. Besides social strife, his family is near to melodrama. Selvon depicts the new coloured ruling class, its aspiration, its foibles and of tourist-like 'Trinfashions' that lead to the coining of such words as 'trinfare,' 'trindrink,' or 'the commu-Demo-Afro-Indo-Trinworkers'. Andrew Salkey says that *The Plains of Caroni* is clearly Samuel Selvon's finest book, and certainly, one of the best of the Caribbean novels.

Selvon's classic novel, *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) highlights the shifting scene to London and to the experience of West Indian immigrants living there. Lamming was the first to deal with a similar subject in his second novel, *The Emigrants* (1954) but largely in terms of historical debate and political theory. *The Emigrants* foreshadows the polemical sterility that dominated Lamming's third and fourth novels. In the hopeful aftermath of the war, the immigrant West Indians flocked to the 'mother country'. Waves of West Indians arrived looking for a prosperous new future but finding instead a cool reception, bone-chilling weather and bleak prospects. Yet, friendships flourish among these 'Lonely Londoners' and they learn to survive and even to love their London.

Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* is usually grouped with a number of works dealing with lives of West Indians and the descendants of West Indians in the United Kingdom. Of these, the earliest is Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark* (1934), the story of a girl from the islands drifting aimlessly in the metropolis. More recently, there have been Andrew Salkey's *Come Home Malcom Heartland* (1975), and Linton Kwesi Johnson's *Dread Beat and Blood* (1975), whose jarring notes capture the electric lifestyles and tensions among a 'Black British' generation born in England of West Indian parents but without a place of their own in their immediate homeland.

This novel is rich in characters such as Galahad, who perspires in winter and freezes in summer; Big city, the dumb blundering crook, who lives in 'Shepherd's Hill,' dreams of fame and fortune; Harris, who likes to play ladedda. Cap is another character, who feeds on captured seagulls, and who has a way with women allergic to work, forever drifting, borrowing, and scheming along his path of least resistance.

Other characters are: Bartholomew the miser, Lewis (an ingénue) the dupe, Daniel, the gent who treats women properly. These characters revolve like moths around Moses Aloetta, the central character. Moses is cool, sardonic, seen-it-all Trinidadian of the terse retort, crusty temper but soft heart. He hates his own soft heart. He acts like the unofficial welfare officer for the West Indians who arrive in London. There is something of the poet in him. He feels the eternal mystery of things, but is crushed by the apparent aimlessness and futility of his own and the group's existence, a state which is depicted succinctly in this statement:

The old Moses standing on the banks of the Thames. Sometimes he think he see some sort of profound realization in his life [...].

Under the kiff-kiff laughter, behind the ballad and the episode, the what-happening summer-is-hearts, he could see a great aimlessness, a great restless swaying movement that leaving you standing on the same spot. As if a forlorn shadow of doom fall on all the spades in the country. (*The Lonely Londoners*, 125)

Selvon depicts the fun-loving aimlessness of West Indians in contrast with the cold uptight seriousness of old Britain. Although the novel is full of pinpricks aimed at the English prejudice, the West Indian's loneliness and nostalgia for their islands never turns into bitter denunciation of segregation and racism. Selvon refrains from exploring the underlying reasons for the presence of West Indians in England. He ascribes their exile to a lack of stable political and cultural identity, possibly because he was himself looking for an answer, both in personal and ideological terms. Hence, he does stretch the expatriate scene further.

Much of the success of *The Lonely Londoners* is also due to its wholly original language, an invented dialect incorporating linguistic elements from a number of West Indian territories. This dialect narrative imparts to the characters and events a degree of Caribbean authenticity not easily found elsewhere in West Indian literature. The novel is viewed as 'a vernacular comedy of pathos' and it is a classic, award-winning novel about those pioneers of the West Indian 'invasion' who found London a glittering city full of human problems. *Lonely Londoners*, says Eric Roach, "is one of the seminal West Indian novels". It ranks beside *A Brighter Sun*, C.L.R. James'

Minty Alley, George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*, and the Jamaican Vic Reid's *New Day*.

Moses Ascending is first published in 1975, in a sense, a sequel to *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), where characters from which earlier London novel are either mentioned or actually reappear: Tolory, who sells a house to Moses; Big city, reportedly gone mad; Galahad, a substantial presence in this later book. Moses, who first appeared in *The Lonely Londoners*, a poor young West Indian who was a kind of one-man welfare organization for other Caribbean immigrants. Moses is a marvelous creation, a natural black radical, who narrates his life and adventures in startlingly vivid dialect— prose that is a joy to read. Twenty years later, in *Moses Ascending*, he still gives the reader much pleasure. *Moses Ascending* explains that Moses moving up to his own house and get away from 'the boys,' as an older man, propertied, climbing above struggle, and anxious to be left in peace.

The ironic religious imagery reminds that the old Moses in *The Lonely Londoners* had indeed been something of a Christ-figure, absorbing the sufferings of the group, whereas the new Moses, 'a different man,' has resentful "Thoughts about...how people want you to become involved, whether you want to or not" (*Moses Ascending*, 14). Moses is actively trying to draw apart from all the hustling of the early days. He is not endeavoring to construct a fully-realized individual persona and at an important level in the changed social and political climate in the 1970s, a world where the effects of oppressive Immigration Laws affect entry and departure—Moses development is explored metaphorically.

The novel, *Moses Ascending* opens where Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas* had left off. Moses buys a house in London with his paltry savings, in which he will spend his retirement by writing his memoirs. Moses is a West Indian version of the twentieth century anti-hero. The house, which, with a laughable sense of fine old English tradition, he even calls his castle, is a dilapidated terrace house in Shepherd's Bush, due for demolition by the London Country Council. He is no longer a tenant but a landlord and furthermore, he wants to be a writer and sets out to write his memoirs in the uppermost room with a large view of the city, his 'castle'. Moses says to Sir Galahad who is a fervent representative of the Black Power Movement: "I just want to live in peace, and reap the harvest of the years of slavery I put in Britain. I don't want people like you around, to upset the applecart" (*Moses Ascending*, 9).

Black Power, developing strength in Britain in the late 1960s and early 1970s is ridiculed in *Moses Ascending*. As a matter of fact, *Moses Migrating* (1983) picks up the story of Moses at the same literal low point— cast down to his basement— at which he had been left at the end of *Moses Ascending*. Moses decides to leave the ‘old Brit’n’ to return to his native Trinidad for Carnival. To assuage his guilt about abandoning the ‘Mother Country’ in its hour of need, Moses becomes an unofficial ambassador for Britain in Trinidad, telling the locals that: “Britain was not only still on her feet, but still the Onlyest country in the world where good breeding and culture come before ill-gotten gains or calls of the flesh” (*Moses Migrating*, 30).

In *Moses Migrating*, Moses’ deepest instinct is freedom, and he evades the attempts of Doris to trap him into marriage: “It was some primitive instinct even stronger than my new found emotions, that bade me be wary and don’t rush in like a fool where angels fear to tread” (*Moses Migrating*, 118). Impersonation provides freedom for Moses both in the sense that he can choose his persona and in the sense that as a disguise it permits him to be elusive and to survive. The irony is that through one kind of impersonation, he discovers part of himself, while, though another, he loses it. This ambiguity is central theme in the novel, *Moses Migrating*. Moses as a Caribbean is a composite man, though he does not himself grasp the point that it is in this feature, both his vulnerability and potential creativity life.

Samuel Selvon as a Postcolonial Novelist

Selvon’s novels are studied as postcolonial novels, for they deal with the problems of post-emancipation of slavery, colonialism, indentured labour and the process of creolization of the respective society, Trinidad, during the 1980s. Selvon, viewed generally as a postcolonial writer, subverts the imperial perspective created from the tension of colonial legacy. He creates new fictions which generate new ways of perceiving human relationships between different races. The challenge for them as postcolonial writers is to strip the implicit class and racial biases, de-mythologise the stereotyped notions that threaten to define them:

The postcolonial literatures attempt to take us from mono-centric to the polyphonic, from the dominance of a single culture into convergent cultures, from pure ancestry into hybridization and creolization, from the novel of persuasion to the novel of carnival. The postcolonial fiction

helps to decolonize imaginations by enacting various modes of escape from the mental straitjackets in which imperial habits of mind had locked them (Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Interrogating Post-colonialism: Theory, Text and Context*, 63)

Selvon, in particular, has made a sincere attempt in his novels to rehabilitate and restructure the fractured relationship between Africans, Caribbeans, and Indians by contemplating an alternative vision of creolization. In his view, a postcolonial writer has many responsibilities.

- a) Rehabilitation of the fragmented relationships between races in the Caribbean context.
- b) Reconstruction of a new perspective preceded by deconstruction of the old myths.
- c) Mythopoeia- the necessity to create myths. All this is possible if as Derek Walcott says “history is seen as an amnesiac blow” (Walcott *Laventille*, 35).

Selvon’s peasant novels are set in Trinidad in which a majority of East Indians are found interacting with the descendants of Europe and West Africa. In Trinidad, people are closer, more intimate, and the inter-communication with the different sections of society is more rapid. Geographically speaking, the Indian settlement is found to a great extent inhabiting the countryside, whereas the African settlement is found in the city. It is this factor which is instrumental in providing the details necessary for an appreciation of the peculiar conditions of life the novel focuses upon.

Selvon’s novels portray a new perspective on Caribbean literature by linking the celebration of carnival to broader racial, ethnic, political, creole and hybrid issues. In this context, Lovelace, in his lecture to the sixth Annual Conference of the *Association for the Teaching of Caribbean, African, and Asian Literature (ATCAL)*, says:

The colonized must accept some of the responsibility for the persistence of colonialism, for their role as ‘victims’. Therefore we should look critically at the process by which cultures are created. If we are adopting a moral relativism we are forced to ensure that we agree with our collaborators on the premises and these premises should be stated as a

kind of prolegomena to multi-cultural education. One of the questions it must ask concerns what these collaborators regard as 'primitive,' as 'pagan,' what kinds of behavior for example: would they like to see confined to carnival time when the untamed animals in us are let out of their cages? (12)

As a West Indian writer, Selvon is concerned with a very human problem as individual, manhood, selfhood of individual society. In peasant novels, he explores the interaction between two major groups in the Caribbean– the East Indians and the West Africans. He explores the experience of black immigrants in London in his immigrant novels. As a member of creole society, Selvon raises the prospects of a person of East Indian origin. His works are creative visionary to reality which re-interpret both history and cultural identity.

The Caribbean has caught between cultures and people within the heterogeneous society. Selvon discusses human relationship between cross cultures which leads towards creolization in the West Indian historical and social situation. All the characters are important to the creative writer, no matter from what nation, tradition, and cultural background they come. Being an insider and not an immigrant, Selvon makes a sincere attempt to explore the inherent problems, animosity, hatred, rancour that underlies the strained relationship between Africans, Europeans and Indians.

CONCLUSION

Within a very brief time the West Indians have produced poets, novelists and a few playwrights of internationally acceptable standard, in spite of the lack of sufficiently large local encouraging public. West Indian literature is one of the newest and most dynamic among the literatures of the British Commonwealth. Its achievement, to date, augurs well for its future.

The present study endeavors to investigate the creole and hybrid identities in the postcolonial process in Selvon's novels. Trinidad's racial complexity results in a muddle even in identifying which race is a descendant of another, and what to call whom. In the sense, throughout the study, the word 'creole' will be used to describe the East Indian settlers in Trinidad and West Indian immigrants in England. The word 'hybrid' will be used to describe those inhabitants who share both the racial and the

cultural values of the ‘white’ master. This study is about the ‘creole’ culture in the postcolonial Caribbean society.

This study makes an attempt to place in critical perspective the role of English in postcolonial fiction with specific reference to Caribbean writings. The writers who have taken the time to critically examine the fiction of Selvon have sought to highlight his creative use of language to create unforgettable plots, characters, and style. Hence, my research focuses on Selvon’s use of language, dialect, humor and immigrant experience. However, my study is expected to take a different turn from the existing body of critical writing on Selvon. My study attempts to examine the fiction of Samuel Selvon from the perspective of creole identity in the Caribbean context within the postcolonial framework.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

- The theoretical delimitation and explanation of the post-colonial processes and concepts, according to different theoreticians such as Frantz Fanon, Stuart Hall, Ania Loomba, Ashcroft, Homi K. Bhabha and Robert Young.
- The theoretical evaluation and explanation of the terms related to this study, including colonialism, hybridity, creolization, colonial discourse and postcolonialism.
- The study will highlight the Caribbean historical background and Caribbean culture in the postcolonial context.
- The theoretical approach to Samuel Selvon’s novels concerning the issues such as creolization, hybridization and postcolonial processes embedded within the text.

METHODOLOGY

The theoretical foundation of the study exposes and argues the existence of postcolonial identities in Caribbean cultural life. The study throws light on the process of hybridity and creolization. However, the theoretical and methodological basis of this research is connected to the most recent and accessible bibliography, or the fully acknowledged and accepted worldwide contributions to the study of postcolonial

literatures and culture. The essential references of this study constitute the theoretical and critical contributions of Frantz Fanon, Stuart Hall, Ania Loomba, Ashcroft, Homi K. Bhabha and Robert Young.

FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS

The aim of the present thesis is to analyze the effects of the change, differences, development and the emergence of creole and hybrid identities during as well as in the aftermath of colonialism in the Caribbean society. This study also intends to reflect on the Caribbean literature in English which is classified under British Commonwealth literature, specifically in Samuel Selvon's novels. The present study is but an attempt to study some of the selected novels of Samuel Selvon— *A Brighter Sun*, *Turn Again Tiger*, *Those Who Eat Cascadura*, *The Lonely Londoners*, *Moses Ascending* and *Moses Migrating*. This thesis will be in five chapters.

Chapter I: Introduction: Caribbean History and Postcolonial Phenomena

The introductory of opening chapter discusses a brief literary background of the Caribbean literature. This chapter provides a literature review on the Caribbean literature. The general background provides a brief account of the author's life and career, his style and pre-occupation with Caribbean literature. It also gives a brief synopsis of Selvon's novels and the critical discourse around them. Selvon's novels focus mainly on the sense of alienation, frustration, creolization, hybridity, abandonment, diaspora, loss of cultural identity and national identity in the context of postcolonial world. 'Exile,' a universal experience, pervades throughout his immigrant novels. His novels are concerned with the unity and assimilation of the Indo-Trinidadian culture into the creole community.

This Chapter presents the history and culture of the Caribbean in the postcolonial context. The Caribbean has many facets of historical events. The colonial struggles of the European powers since the 15th century play a significant role in the history of the Caribbean. In the 20th century, the Caribbean was again important during World War II, in the decolonization wave in the post-war period. Genocide, slavery, immigration and rivalry between world powers gave the Caribbean history an impact disproportionate to the size of this small region. The 'Caribbean,' generally considered as one area, is highly discrete in its race, topography and languages, and

includes the mainland Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana, the Atlantic island of Barbados, the Lesser Antilles and whose size and history gave it an early sense of separate nationhood. This part also discusses slave trade, slavery and Middle Passage/Triangular trade in the Caribbean context.

The second part of this chapter explains the postcolonial ideas, concepts and processes in the Caribbean context. It contains a brief historical background of the aftermath of colonialism and its impact on Caribbean culture. The chapter gives the definition and explanation of terms such as 'colonialism,' 'postcolonialism,' 'diaspora,' 'hybridity,' 'double consciousness' and 'multiple identities' as defined by different theoreticians. This part also discusses Selvon as a postcolonial novelist.

Chapter II: Caribbean Creole Language and Creolization in the Selected Fiction of Selvon

Chapter II makes an attempt to study the Caribbean Creole language and Creolization in Selvon's novels. This chapter is divided into two parts- the first part of this chapter discusses the using of Caribbean creole language by the Caribbean writers and in Selvon novels. Language plays an important role in determining human identity in the postcolonial society. For the Caribbean writers English language was the language of oppression because of the history of the region. From a linguistic point of view, the 'creole dialect' of the region was neglected and disclaimed for a long time. Not only the change in linguistic approaches, but also the literature produced by the Caribbean writers began to change the position of the languages of the Caribbean in literature and in society in general.

The second part of this chapter explains that the creolization process in the Caribbean is a historical, psychological, and socio-cultural process that is to understand the 'New World' experience (Brathwaite). This part also examines the terms rooted in the ethnic and cultural complexities of the Caribbean experience. Creolization in the Caribbean context is a historical, psychological and socio-cultural process that lies at the very centre of any discussion on trans-culturalism, trans-nationalism, diversity and hybridization. This part examines the process of creolization in the aforementioned wider context. The Caribbean society is the product of a complex ethnic and cultural experience. The origins of creolization for the Caribbean region lie in the contested and interrelated process of colonization,

slavery, and migration. In this section, the process of creolization is explained under the vision of different writers like Ashcroft, Edward Brathwaite, Glissant, Stuart Hall, Derek Walcott and Selvon.

Today, the Caribbean islands accommodate the legacy of hundreds of years of colonization and display a large population of mixed races and cultures. Trinidad and Tobago alone accounts for a hybrid population of 1,096,585 as per July 2008 records. The ethnic composition in today's Trinidad is reflective of its colonial history. According to 2008 data of Trinidad and Tobago Central Statistical Office, the ethnic composition of Trinidad can be broken up according to the following constituents: East Indians: 40.03%, Africans: 37.52%, Mixed: 20.46%, White (Caucasian): 0.63%, Chinese and others: 1.36% (<http://www.cso.gov.tt/cso/census2012-14/default.asp>). These mixed races and cultures gave rise to a creolized and hybrid society.

Chapter III: Creole Identity in Selvon's Peasant Novels

Chapter III is an attempt at studying creole identity in Samuel Selvon's peasant novels. His Peasant novels, namely, *A Brighter Sun*, *Turn Again Tiger* and *Those Who Eat Cascadura*, have been analyzed on the light of postcolonial theories and processes identified by various scholars. It has been concluded that the racial composition of Trinidad or Caribbean is reflective of the process of colonization and the characters depicted in the novels exhibit creolized and hybridized identities. The peasants novels written in the post-emancipation period of the 1950s, read like the novels written by Naipaul, Reid, Lamming and Wilson Harris. They can be read as Selvon's response to the problem of 'Creole' and the history of the postcolonial Caribbean.

Chapter IV: Creole Identity in Selvon's Immigrant Novels

An attempt has been made in Chapter IV at studying the creole and hybrid identity in Selvon's immigrant novels, in particular, the creole and hybrid identity in London. Selvon's novels fall into three categories— peasant novels, middle class novels and immigrant novels. They offer a broader glimpse into the ongoing process of creolization in the Caribbean setting which remains dynamic. Immigrant novels are also called 'London novels' because, in these novels, Selvon depicts the experience of the West Indian immigrants living in London. His immigrant novels *The Lonely Londoners*, *Moses Ascending* and *Moses Migrating* are analyzed on the light of creole

and hybrid identity and an attempt has been made to relate the creole and hybrid identity with the postcolonial theory. On critical examination, the novels open up avenues for the researcher to analyze the rampant notion of 'creole/black' and 'hybrid' identity formation and definition through a plethora of postcolonial themes. Simultaneously, this research work has also made an attempt to analyze deeply the prominent theme of 'exile' and 'immigration' in the Caribbean context and also in Selvon's immigrant novels.

Chapter V: Conclusion

Chapter V, the concluding chapter brings together the ideas and perspectives discussed in the earlier chapters. It also attempts to draw conclusion about the creolization process and racism concerning the socio-cultural processes of the postcolonial Caribbean. The overall conclusions are being drawn with reference to the historical and social background vis-à-vis the experience of creolization and hybridization in the Caribbean. The theoretical data concerning the cultural processes resulting from postcolonial conundrum, and the postcolonial reading of Samuel Selvon's fiction as a literary reflection of the colonial and postcolonial experience in the Caribbean society have been examined in three statements. Firstly, the racial composition of the Caribbean is reflective of the process of colonization. Secondly, the characters present in the novels preserve vestiges of their cultures of origin, yet they also exhibit western qualities which make them 'hybridized' and 'creolized'. Thirdly, the novels are not created artificially by the author, but are a credible representation of social realities observed in the Caribbean society.

WORKS CITED

- Selvon, Samuel. *A Brighter Sun*. London: Longman, 1989. Print.
- . *As Island Is a World*. Toronto: TSAR, 1993. Print.
- . *I Hear Thunder*. London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1963. Print.
- . *Moses Ascending*. London: Heinemann, 1975. Print.
- . *Moses Migrating*. Washington, DC: Three Continents, 1992. Print.
- . *The Housing Lark*. London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1965. Print.
- . *The Lonely Londoners*. London: Longman, 1989. Print.
- . *The Plains of Caroni*. Toronto: Williams-Wallace, 1986. Print.
- . *Those Who Eat the Cascadura*. Toronto: TSAR, 1990. Print.
- . *Turn Again Tiger*. London: Heinemann, 1979. Print.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. Eds. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 2003. Print.
- . *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. London: Routledge, 2001. Print.
- Ashcroft, Bill. *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Studies*. London: Routledge, 1998. Print.
- Barbar Howes. (Ed.) *From The Green Antilles*. London: Souvenir Press, 1967, p. 12. Print.
- Baugh, Edward. Ed. *Critics on Caribbean Literature*. Boston: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1978. Print.
- Benitez-Rojo, Antonio. *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective*. Tran. James E. Maraniss. London: Duke University Press, 1996. Print.
- Bhabha K. Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994. Print.
- Bowen, Portian-Chang and Marsha. "Samuel Selvon Under Scrutiny: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Criticism of Selvon's Novels". *Emerald Group Publishing Ltd*, Vol 27. No. 1, 2008.
- Boyarin, Daniel and Boyarin, Jonathan. *Theorizing Diaspora*. edited by Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006. Print.
- Brathwaite, Edward Kamau. *Contradictory Omens: Cultural Diversity and Integration in the Caribbean*. Mona: Savacou, 1974. Print.

- . *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1978. Print.
- Caruth, Cathy. "Trauma and Experience: Introduction." *Trauma Exploration in Memory*. Ed. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1995. Print.
- . *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and history*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996. Print.
- Cohen, Robin. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. USA and Canada: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Coulthard, G.R. "The West Indian Novel of Immigration". *The Phylon Quarterly*: Clark Atlanta University, Vol. 20, No. 1 (1st Qtr, 1959).
- D' Fred, Aguiar. *The Longest Memory*. London: Catto and Windus, 1994. Print.
- Dabydeen, David, Nana Wilson Tagoe. *A Reader's Guide to West Indian and Black British Literature*. London: Hansib, 1997. Print.
- Eliot, T S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent". *Modern Criticism: Theory and Practice*. Eds. Walter Sutton and Richard Foster. USA: Odyssey Press, 1963. p, 140. Print.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto Press, 1986. Print.
- . *The Wretched of the Earth*. Tran. Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Press, 1968. Print.
- Gilkes, Michael. *The West Indian Novel*. Boston: Twayne, 1981. Print.
- Glissant, Edouard. *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. U.S.A: Caraf Books, 1989. Print.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," Ed. in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. *Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. Print.
- Huddart, David. *Homi K. Bhabha*. New York: Routledge, 2006. Print.
- James, C.L.R. *The Black Jacobins*. London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1980. Print.
- James, Louis. *Caribbean Literature in English*. London and New York: Longman, 1999. Print.
- King Bruce, ed. *West Indian Literature*. London: The Macmillan Press, 1979. Print.
- Loomba, Ania. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. 2nd Ed. London: Routledge, 2005. Print.
- McLeod, John. *Beginning Postcolonialism*. UK: Manchester Uni Press, 2000. Print.

- . Ed. *The Routledge Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2007. Print.
- McWatt, Mark. "The Preoccupation with the Past in West Indian Literature". *Caribbean Quarterly*, 28, nos. 1-2 (1985): 12-19.
- Memmi, Albert. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. London: Earthscan Publication, 2003. Print.
- Mongia, Padmini, Ed. *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010. Print.
- Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. India: Random House, 1999. Print.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Interrogating Post-colonialism: Theory, Text and Context*. USA: University of Michigan, 1996. p, 63. Print.
- Nasta, Susheila, Ed. *Critical Perspectives on Samuel Selvon*. Washington D.C: Three Continents, 1988. Print.
- Nayar, K. Pramod. *Postcolonial Literature*. Delhi: Longman, 2008. Print.
- Oluwatayo, Jacob Adeuyan. *The Return to the Tidal Flow of the Middle Passage*. USA: AuthorHouse, 2011. Print.
- Page, Kezia. *Transnational Negotiations in Caribbean Diasporic Literature: Remitting the Text*. USA and Canada: Routledge, 2011. Print.
- Palmie, Stephan and Francisco. Eds. *The Caribbean: History of the Region and Its Peoples*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago, 2011. Print.
- Ramchand, Kenneth. "Celebrating Sam Selvon". *Journal of Modern Literature*, Vol 20, No.1 (Summer, 1996).
- . *The West Indian Novel and Its Background*. London: Heinemann, 1983. Print.
- Said, Edward W. *Cultural and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage, 1993. Print.
- Salick, Roydon. *The Novels of Samuel Selvon: A Critical Study*. London: Greenwood Press, 2001. Print.
- Taylor, Patrick. "Narrative, Pluralism, and Decolonization: Recent Caribbean Literature". *College Literature*, Vol. 19/20, No. 3/1, Oct., 1992 - Feb., 1993, pp. 78-89

Walcott, Derek. *Collected Poems*. New York: Farrar, Strams and Giroux, 1948-1984. Print.

Young, Robert J C. *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.

---. *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print.

Web References

“Caribbean Literature”. *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation. Web. 7 Jan. 2015. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caribbean_literature>.

Rutherford, J. “Identity: Community, Culture, Difference”. Ed., London, 1 Jan. 1990. Web. 7 June 2014. <http://belintellectuals.eu/media/library>.

Hall_Stuart_Cultural_Identity_and_Diaspora.doc&ei=G8sVPj2FYqIuAT4s4DICw&u sg=AFQjCNEd1AFT7kc

“Post Colonial Theory- Extended Definition Essay by Adkilla”. Study Mode. LITERATURE PERIODICALS, 21 May 2013. Web. 7 Jan. 2014.

“Postcolonialism”. *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation. Web. 7th Jan. 2014. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postcolonialism>>.

Choudhury, Kafeel Ahmed. *Migrancy and Identity: A Study of V. S. Naipaul’s Nonfictional Works*. Thesis. Mizoram, Mizoram University: 2013.

“The Creole Identity in the Caribbean Postcolonial Society: A Study of Selvon’s *A Brighter Sun*.” *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies (IJIMS)*, May. 2014. Web. 7 Jan. 2015. <<http://www.ijims.com/uploads/404a2934c5e50>

“The Process of Creolization and History in Postcolonial Caribbean”. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Literature and Education*, 2 July 2014. Web. 8 Nov. 2014.